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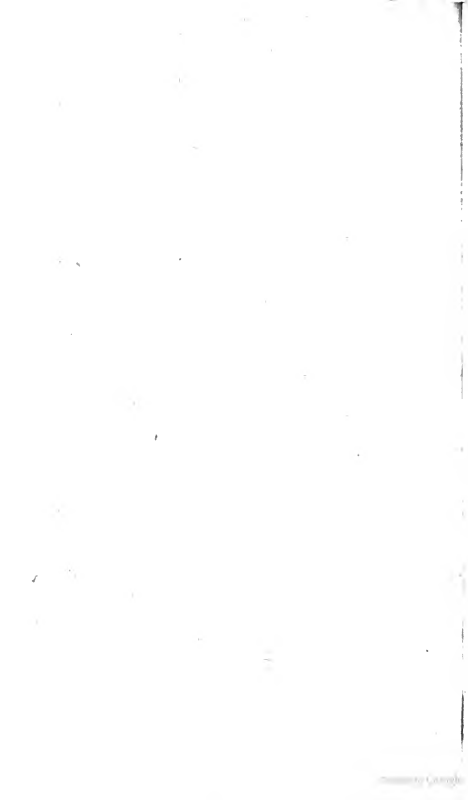
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THE  
**THEORY**  
OF THE  
**INFANTRY MOVEMENTS.**

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BY THE  
**Author of "The British Drill."**

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VOLUME II.

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1827.

# THE HISTORY OF THE CITY OF LONDON

BY SAMUEL JOHNSON

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

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## ERRATA TO VOLUME II.

Page	Line	
1	1	for Chapter 7, read Chapter 6.
4	8	note, for <i>where</i> , read <i>were</i> .
15	3	for <i>into columns</i> , read <i>into a column</i> .
17	29	<i>dele</i> the word <i>is</i> .
23	30	for <i>files</i> , read <i>file</i> .
24	19	or read <i>and</i> .
27	3	<i>will</i> , read <i>shall</i> .
	12	<i>files</i> , read <i>file</i> .
31	16	<i>its own</i> , read <i>his own battalion</i> .
	26	<i>divisions</i> , read <i>division</i> .
62	8	<i>their relative position so sufficiently explains, as not to need, read their relative positions sufficiently explain, not to need.</i>
	11	note, for <i>would</i> , read <i>should</i> .
75	22	for <i>which</i> , read <i>what</i> .
77	16	<i>word of commands</i> , read <i>words of command</i> .
84	last line	for <i>principle</i> , read <i>principal</i> .
88	18	after <i>places</i> , add <i>it</i> .
89	15	for <i>directs</i> , read <i>direct</i> .
	25	<i>more</i> , read <i>move</i> .
92	15	note, for <i>word of commands</i> , read <i>words of command</i> .
96	1	insert a comma after <i>enumerated</i> .
100	11	for <i>right</i> , read <i>left</i> .
	12	<i>left</i> read <i>right</i> .
109	9	a semicolon after <i>them</i> .
111	3	for <i>to</i> , read <i>two</i> .
	5	note, for <i>Nerra</i> , read <i>Narra</i> .
122	5	note, for <i>on</i> , read <i>when in</i> .
127	7	for <i>by divisions in file</i> , read <i>of divisions by files</i> .
	8	<i>on</i> , read <i>in</i> .
128	24	<i>dele</i> the words <i>at a point</i> .
136	4	after the word <i>experience</i> , add <i>from</i> .
138	22	for <i>they hare</i> , read <i>it has</i> .
141	14	note, for <i>on</i> , read <i>in</i> .
	15	for <i>on</i> , read <i>in</i> .
143	1	<i>a</i> , read <i>the</i> .
144	11	<i>troops</i> , read <i>army</i> .
149	last line	for <i>echelle</i> , read <i>echelon</i> .
152	9	for <i>to</i> , read <i>in</i> .
154	10	<i>which</i> , read <i>that</i> .
	26	<i>one of two</i> , read <i>one or two</i> .
159	2	note, for <i>were</i> , read <i>was</i> .
160	10	after the word <i>theory</i> add <i>which</i> .
162	10	note, <i>dele</i> the word <i>the</i> .
164	13	for <i>files</i> , read <i>file</i> .
166	4	<i>in</i> , read <i>into</i> .
172	1	<i>as well as</i> , read <i>and</i> .
	25	<i>those</i> , read <i>the divisions</i> .

# ERRATA.

vii

- | Page | Line         |                                                                                                                         |
|------|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 173  | .. 5         | for <i>complicate</i> , read <i>complicated</i> .                                                                       |
|      | 25           | .. <i>division</i> , read <i>divisions</i> .                                                                            |
| 174  | .. 27        | .. <i>portions</i> , read <i>portion</i> .                                                                              |
| 179  | .. 11        | after <i>echelon</i> add <i>from column</i> .                                                                           |
| 184  | .. 18        | for <i>the rear</i> , read <i>in rear</i> .                                                                             |
| 185  | .. 13        | .. <i>determine</i> , read <i>to determine</i> .                                                                        |
| 190  | .. 12        | <i>dele</i> the word <i>it</i> .                                                                                        |
|      | 22           | for <i>inconveniences</i> , read <i>the inconvenience</i> .                                                             |
| 193  | .. 3         | .. <i>is</i> , read <i>are</i> .                                                                                        |
| 197  | .. 28        | .. <i>sides</i> , read <i>side</i> .                                                                                    |
| 204  | .. 15        | .. <i>regulated</i> , read <i>regulating</i> .                                                                          |
| 211  | .. 26        | .. <i>them</i> , read <i>those rear echellons</i> .                                                                     |
| 219  | .. 9         | a semicolon after <i>flank</i> .                                                                                        |
| 221  | .. 13        | instead of <i>for</i> read <i>of</i> .                                                                                  |
| 224  | .. 5         | after <i>evolutions</i> , add <i>where the line faces to the rear</i> .                                                 |
| 230  | .. 16        | for <i>each take post</i> , read <i>take post each</i> ,                                                                |
|      | 2            | <i>note</i> , for <i>line</i> , read <i>lines</i> .                                                                     |
| 238  | .. 11        | for <i>one</i> , read <i>one battalion</i> .                                                                            |
| 241  | .. 15        | after <i>movement</i> , add <i>made to</i> .                                                                            |
| 244  | .. 5         | <i>note</i> , for <i>half</i> , read <i>halt</i> .                                                                      |
| 251  | .. 7         | for <i>embarrassment</i> , read <i>embarrassment</i> .                                                                  |
|      | 5            | <i>note</i> , for <i>in divisions by files</i> , read <i>by divisions in file</i> .                                     |
| 253  | .. 2         | <i>note</i> , for 43, read 34.                                                                                          |
| 254  | .. 5         | for <i>file</i> , read <i>files</i> .                                                                                   |
| 255  | .. 4         | <i>note</i> , for <i>them</i> , read <i>they</i> .                                                                      |
| 257  | .. 19        | <i>dele</i> the words <i>or back</i> .                                                                                  |
| 261  | .. 7         | for <i>is</i> , read <i>has</i> .                                                                                       |
| 262  | .. 15        | .. <i>other to face it first changes</i> , read <i>others to face it first change</i> .                                 |
| 266  | .. 20        | the comma after <i>alignement</i> , to be after <i>present</i> .                                                        |
| 274  | .. 17        | <i>dele</i> the word <i>and</i> .                                                                                       |
| 275  | .. 19        | for <i>them</i> , read <i>they</i> .                                                                                    |
| 281  | .. last line | for <i>that</i> , read <i>the platoon</i> .                                                                             |
| 282  | .. 2         | for <i>those</i> , read <i>the divisions</i> .                                                                          |
|      | 21           | .. <i>the adjutant major and adjutants acts</i> , read <i>the adjutant majors and adjutants act</i> .                   |
| 283  | .. 4         | <i>note</i> , for <i>an</i> , read <i>a</i> .                                                                           |
| 286  | .. 3         | <i>note</i> , for the words <i>and the column to face to the rear</i> , read <i>to face to the rear of the column</i> . |
| 287  | .. 6         | <i>note</i> , for <i>the</i> , read <i>their</i> .                                                                      |
| 289  | .. 22        | after <i>naturally</i> , add <i>by it</i> .                                                                             |
| 292  | .. 12        | for <i>those</i> , read <i>those divisions</i> .                                                                        |
|      | 24           | .. <i>sides</i> , read <i>side</i> .                                                                                    |
| 295  | .. 19        | .. <i>backs</i> , read <i>back</i> .                                                                                    |
| 297  | .. 6         | insert a comma after <i>two</i> , and <i>dele</i> the comma after <i>first</i> .                                        |
| 299  | .. 12        | after <i>words</i> , add <i>grand division stand fast remaining</i> .                                                   |
| 317  | .. 5         | for <i>his</i> , read <i>its</i> .                                                                                      |
| 320  | .. 29        | .. <i>on</i> , read <i>in</i> .                                                                                         |
| 324  | .. 20        | after <i>guides</i> , add <i>of the battalion</i> .                                                                     |
| 333  | .. 27        | after <i>by</i> , add <i>the spot to be occupied by</i> .                                                               |
| 336  | .. last line | for <i>has been</i> , read <i>is</i> .                                                                                  |
| 340  | .. last line | .. <i>in masses</i> read <i>in a line of masses</i> .                                                                   |
| 342  | .. 9         | for <i>soldiers</i> , read <i>the soldiers</i> .                                                                        |
| 354  | .. 1         | .. <i>preparatorily</i> , read <i>preparatively</i> .                                                                   |
|      | 9            | .. <i>charge</i> , read <i>change</i> .                                                                                 |
| 357  | .. 1         | <i>note</i> , for <i>breast</i> , read <i>breadth of</i> .                                                              |
| 362  | .. 5         | for <i>where</i> , read <i>were</i> .                                                                                   |
|      | 20           | .. <i>position</i> , read <i>positions</i> .                                                                            |
| 366  | .. 5         | .. <i>alignement</i> , read <i>new alignement</i> .                                                                     |
|      | 7            | .. <i>whole</i> , read <i>divisions</i> .                                                                               |
| 376  | .. 1         | <i>note</i> , for <i>observation</i> , read <i>observations</i> .                                                       |

Page	Line
376 ..	3 for <i>defect</i> , read <i>defect of</i> .
380 ..	last line, for <i>the evolutions they</i> , read <i>the evolution the Austrians</i> .
386 ..	3 for <i>defect</i> , read <i>defeat</i> .
390 ..	6 note, for <i>advanced</i> , read <i>advance</i> .
	7 for <i>and conceives</i> , read <i>he conceives</i> .
	8 .. <i>the troops</i> , read <i>that the troops</i> .
395 ..	6 .. <i>and such is</i> , read <i>and as such</i> .
397 ..	11 .. <i>battalions</i> , read <i>battalion</i> .
403 ..	20 .. <i>they finish</i> , read <i>it finishes</i> .
404 ..	13 .. <i>its</i> , read <i>his</i> .
405 ..	14 .. <i>each</i> , read <i>each side</i> .
406 ..	2 parenthesis closes after <i>officers</i> , not <i>after rank</i> .
409 ..	8 for <i>superintending</i> , read <i>superintends</i> .
414 ..	9 .. <i>its</i> , read <i>his</i> .
415 ..	13 .. <i>battalion</i> , read <i>battalions</i> .
422 ..	10 .. <i>merits</i> , read <i>merit</i> .
426 ..	2 a semicolon after <i>exertion</i> , and <i>dele the one after it</i> .
427 ..	1 for <i>flank</i> , read <i>flanks</i> .
428 ..	2 note, for <i>performs</i> , read <i>perform</i> .
	6 for <i>at</i> , read <i>as</i> .
429 ..	23 .. <i>positions</i> , read <i>position</i> .



## CHAP. VII.—CONTINUED.



### SECTION IX.



#### *Alteration in the Front of an open Column.<sup>55</sup>*

THE second description of alteration we have noticed the column to be liable to, is that operating on its front, by either increasing or decreasing it; an object, which, as it may be accomplished by files, or by operating on the fractional parts, presents two general methods of execution.

The first of these, in which the files move back, or up, seems more calculated to answer momentary and trifling impediments, and, as such, is particularly suited to those cases where the ground continually narrowing, or extending, demands frequent alterations in the front for occupation: the pliancy this method presents, in meeting so readily the exist-

<sup>55</sup> R. and R. part ii. § 56, 75, 58; part iii.; Diminish and Increase front of the column, § 87, 88, 89, 90; M. and P. attention in covering-serjeants, in commanders of battalions.

ing occasion to which the moving back, or calling in, of a few files suffices, has induced some military men to support this general flexibility as a plea for its exclusive admittance ; yet, as the awkward position in which the body is brought by it, as well as the march in file to which it compels, does not recommend its use, it should be confined to those cases merely, where the contraction is but of short duration, for, if protracted, the second mode, in which the fractional parts of the battalion are acted upon, should be preferred ; as the reduction is then effected without any improper influence on the disposition, since a column of sections is as regular a formation as that of grand divisions. It is of this latter movement we shall first speak.

The modes in which those reductions by the fractional parts may be performed, are various, and as in all other military movements, where different ways are offered to attain a same purpose, each of them is endowed with its peculiar benefits, true, or plausible at least, to fix its excellence ; none however, will stand a fairer chance of examination than that directed by the late Rules and Regulations, in which the doubling takes place behind the reverse flank, as the regular succession is kept up, and the column constantly remains in readiness to form the line (*fig. 92, 93*) ; but if so far favourable, it is, however, not free from censure, for, as the operation takes place on the reverse flank of the column, the line of pivots is deranged

by it; yet this objection, though plausible, loses much of its weight on a more leisurely examination, since, easily remedied, it is, by the nature of the obstacle, often unavoidable, as impediments are no less frequently encountered on the pivot than on the reverse side of the column, and that, if facing the former, the original line must be unavoidably departed from, and if not, the space left free, must, after all, determine the line of march; besides, under the conjuncture of deviation in the front, this can never be important, and never become of a description sufficiently momentous to counter-balance the immense result derived from the regular succession that is kept up by it, for neither is this advantage of preservation in the primitive disposition retained, where the reduction is attempted by a central movement, nor where the right or left is permanently fixed to execute upon, since by the first, derangement in the organization of the several fractional parts must occur, as a matter of necessity;<sup>56</sup> and in the latter, although the relative situation between the operating parts is not disturbed, the general disposition of the whole will merely remain the same, when the flank performed

<sup>56</sup> *Fig.* 98 represents the movement as formerly practised on a central division; of the three sections of which the company is supposed to consist, the second leads, the first follows it, and the third moves in rear: *fig.* 100 shows the same operation on the centre, as recommended by Major Werkamp, when the right is leading, and *fig.* 101 when it is the left. General Saldern's mode is seen in *fig.* 99, the centre section, if there are three, steps a-head, the left next, and the right one is in rear.

upon, happens to lead ; for were the right a-head, and the breaking exclusively directed in rear of the proper left, a complete dislocation from it must be the unavoidable consequence, and when wheeled into line, the right of the company must be formed on the left, the left on the right, and every individual be driven from the spot allotted to him, at original formation (*fig. 97*) ; strange it will appear, that thus defective, the central formation could, for any time, have taken the lead, and challenged general practice ; but such was its prevalence for a long while, and such was the prejudice custom had established in its behalf, that we are reluctantly compelled to record the name of General Saldern, as countenancing the contrivance,<sup>57</sup> and no less surprised to find, the speedy completion supposed to be derived in recovering

<sup>57</sup> Saldern's Elements of Tactics, part ii. sect. ii. § 10 ; this Work which tends principally to elucidate the Prussian manœuvres, as they stood under Frederick the Great, has, with justice, been considered as the most complete treatise hitherto published on the infantry tactics ; the diligent search of the author into the theoretical rules, upon which the execution of the movements are founded, his attention in reclaiming principles where neglected, difficulties where experienced for the want of them, all attest its merit, a perusal will, however, evince that although the general outlines of the infantry movements were known and fixed upon at the time the Prussian general wrote, some of the subordinate circumstances were still not attended to, or at least if so, not properly understood, a defect, which was, as much as possible, supplied by additional exertion : those elements have been translated by Landmann with great accuracy, but perhaps with too much fidelity to the German text, which occasionally renders him somewhat obscure.

the former front, where both wings have been thus originally thrown to the rear of the middle part, to be the argument the Prussian tactician produces to support the expedient; a position obviously fallacious, since, under both cases of a flank, and a central diminution, the last section which terminates the evolution by completing the front, has the same ground to go over, or, owing to the obliquing, so few steps less to perform, as can never reasonably enter into consideration. But still less is the reason drawn for the constant reduction, or augmentation, on a same flank, and permanency of the right or the left to be so appointed, entitled to approbation; as the uniformity in the performance expected to be derived from it, is more impaired than promoted, from the differences which naturally occur, as either wing regulates the march; and the operations become infinitely more unlike, where they invariably take place on the same flank, and which might, occasionally, be the pivot or the reverse side, than where that latter circumstance of direction is attended to, and, instead of the identical right or left, it is the same and relative flank of the column (pivot or reverse), which is acted upon, and preserved in the position it previously occupied.

It is a rule for all contractions in the front, when recurring in motion, to be so contrived that the new shape be assumed about 12 or 15 paces from the spot which compels to them; this, which is principally intended to secure against delay, furnishes

an irresistible answer to those who were induced to recommend the removal of the identical files, or fractional parts, immediately obstructed; as prepared in time to place the troops opposite the line of march, it removes the apology any retardment might otherwise suggest in behalf of so irregular a contrivance.<sup>56</sup>

Those increases and decreases in the front of the column may take place while the body stands still, or while it is in motion, or to speak more technically, while on the march as well as while halting; but though, in the latter case, they will invariably result from the simultaneous operation of all the divisions, which move back, or up, at one and at the same time; this will not invariably be so where they happen during the advance, as it may then be either effected in concert, all together, or in succession by the following divisions that conform by repeating, each, the similar alteration undergone a-head, as they respectively arrive at the spot, where the leading one increased or diminished its front. Of these two methods, the former is more regular, and as such preferable; it is, besides, less liable to occasion extension, an evil particularly to be repressed here, as that to which those evolutions of alteration in the front betray great disposition.

<sup>56</sup> As the part to be kept a-head has always time to gain the line of march opposite the passage left open, it is against every rule of prudence, and of the art, to allow inversion here, which is never admissible but when precluded of the safer means, by which the natural disposition is preserved.

However this principle of immediate execution, throughout, as established for the battalion, does not equally apply to the line, where it is more reasonably restrained within each corps; each operating its immediate alteration in the front, as its leading division approaches the point, at which the head battalion performed. This is satisfactorily accounted for in the unlike characters those movements display, when they are accomplished in battalion, or in line; for no longer resulting, in the latter case, from a single command, uniformity would not, as in the battalion, be derived from it, while the corps in rear would by it be subjected, for a length of time, to proceed unnecessarily under the precarious disposition of a reduced front, a position always unfavourable to the preservation of distance, and therefore, so far as circumstances permit, to be always avoided.<sup>50</sup>

It is in consistency with the principle just adduced, that the restoring of the former front is likewise recommended, so soon as the thwarting obstacle, which has compelled to the contraction, is left behind; this, of course, is then accomplished by the contrary movement to that employed before

<sup>50</sup> We have had already occasion to remark that five files, where three deep, and three where in two ranks, are sufficient to enable a column to proceed on the march, without lengthening out; however, as its advance is much alleviated by being not so restricted and reduced to the last verge of possibility, where circumstances permit, the front should be invariably increased. "To seek for difficulties, where difficulties are not imposed upon us, is not safe, as it leaves to chance that which might have been secured by precaution."

on reduction ; so nearly allied, it will be readily inferred, that, liable to the same differences in performance, the augmentation, like the diminution, may take place while halted or while on the march, and that, in the latter case, it exhibits also the execution of a successive or immediate performance, which last, however, if preferred, will require the battalion to be entirely disengaged, by the rear division that has left the impediment behind, before operating. From what has been previously said, it will immediately appear that the increase of front in a column of the line will most likely be performed by corps, which each accomplishes it, as its last division has passed the defile.<sup>60</sup>

Thus concluding what relates to the breaking off by divisions, we shall now refer to the evolution by files, which, as they may be brought back by merely doubling in rear of those not displaced (*fig. 107*), or situated *en potence*,<sup>61</sup> behind the three flank files only (*fig. 108*) presents two kinds of performances, of which the latter, as of a more general application,

<sup>60</sup> A difference not adverted to, and which those movements still exhibit in their performances is, that the division in front, may either advance straight forwards, and that in rear oblique next to it (*fig. 102 A*), or both incline, as shown in *B*; or again that, that in front obliques so as to clear the one in rear, which then has to continue the perpendicular march, while moving up as seen in *C*; the first of these was that adopted by the British, the second is that used by the Danes, and the third that employed by the French and Dutch.

<sup>61</sup> When so, the men of the first rank cover the first file; those of the second, the second; and those of the third rank, the third file (*fig. 108*).



is chiefly preferred, and the former, as merely answering a reduction amounting to half the front, is seldom employed.

A diminution in the front will seldom be required from a column after it has entered an alignment, in order to form ; for were obstructions on the new line to demand such an operation, the column would, in all probability, have been previously prepared for it, by a timely reduction ; had this been neglected, however, or was the immediate formation of the line not designed, and the ground such as to dictate the necessity for an immediate alteration, after a change in the line of march was completed, the entry should be so contrived as to remove the divisions sufficiently, and enough to enable them, after wheeling, to assume the contracted shape, when still at about fifteen paces from the spot that requires the reduced position.

We have already noticed, that according to the late Rules and Regulations, the fractional parts, subdivisions, or sections, on the pivot side, fell back, and removed in rear of the one posted on the reverse side of the column, which, if on the march steadily continued its advance, at the pace it was proceeding in before, while the others marked-time, until cleared on the flank, when they obliques so as to gain the relative positions behind it (*fig. 94*), but were it to occur from the halt, the part performed upon stood fast, while the other fractional parts that were to double faced inwards, and in file moved to the rear and round their respective serjeants,

or markers, who took post before, to show the ground which each was to occupy (*fig. 92, 93*).

In increasing, those, in rear used to oblique to the pivot side, till cleared in front, when they resumed the perpendicular advance, to move straight forwards into their positions, next to that in front to which they were to unite (*fig. 95, 96*). If this took place from the halt, as those in rear were directed to perform in the accelerated cadence, the object was readily attained; but where the column was kept in motion, it exhibited less facility, and evidently confined the advance in front to the ordinary pace, for were that a-head, to step off in the quick time, those in rear would experience some difficulty to come up. To insure still greater exactness, the late Rules and Regulations also added, that both when increasing and decreasing the front of a column, arms were to be carried, and the ranks to be closed during these operations.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>62</sup> Those evolutions have undergone great alterations by the Field Exercise and Evolutions: part ii. § 59 and 60.

Increasing from the halt: "The company standing in open column of subdivision (suppose the right in front) receives from the instructor of the drill, a caution *to form company*; upon which the covering serjeant (*fig. 103*), will run out to mark the reverse flank, the instructor will instantly order, *right subdivisions, right about three quarters face, quick march*, and the reverse file will march straight to the covering serjeant; when the subdivision has obliques so as to gain the line of the left subdivision, the commander gives the word *halt, front, dress*, and takes post on the left, the pivot flank of the company. The men front to the left from the right about three quarters face."

When the obstacle is trifling, and calls merely for the removal of a few files, the directed number of

Diminishing. "On the cautionary command from the instructor of the drill, *form subdivisions*, the commander advances to mark the point where the left flank of the right subdivision is to rest (*fig. 105*). The instructor of the drill, while the commander is advancing to that point, orders, *right subdivision, left half face, quick march*; and the file of the inner flank of the right subdivision marches straight to the commander, and when it shall reach him, the subdivision receives the word, *halt, front, dress*. The commander remains on the left flank of the right subdivision, and his serjeant on that of the left; the subdivisions, or sections, on the reverse flank, must always double in front of the pivot subdivisions or sections; thus, when the right is in front the doubling will be in front of the left division; and when the left is in front, it will be in front of the right division."

Increasing on the march. "The company marching in open column of subdivisions (suppose right in front) receives from the instructor of the drill the cautionary command, *form company, right subdivision, right turn*; the men at the word *turn*, lengthen their pace to 33 inches, and when the division has cleared the extent of its own front (*fig. 104*), the left subdivision which has continued to march with the utmost steadiness, will have gained its inner flank, and then the commander of the company gives the word *front turn* to the right subdivision, which moves in line with the left subdivision, and takes post on the pivot flank of the company towards which he has been moving."

Diminishing, "When the instructor of the drill gives the caution *to form subdivisions* (*fig. 106*), the commander of the company advances to the proper distance in front, the instructor then gives the words *right subdivision, left half turn*, and it instantly moves off at the double march, if the column has been moving in quick time; and when the inner file of the reverse subdivision shall reach the commander, he gives the words *front turn quick*, and the subdivision takes up the step, at which the pivot divisions

files on the pivot flank ordered to break off, turn to the right or left, and always inwards, and successively wheel short behind the flank of those which, not interrupted in their march, pursue the advance (*fig. 108*) ; this, of course, might be repeated as often as emergency demands, until the front be reduced to three, or even two, if the troops be standing in two ranks, at which period, however, the body, by the evolution, is brought in file. By a part of the files thrown back that are brought up again, a portion of the front may be recovered, and if the whole be successively, or at once, ordered on the line, the former breadth will be restored.<sup>63</sup>

According to the French,<sup>64</sup> the fractional reduction takes place also behind the reverse flank, and

“ of the column are moving ; if the column has been marching in “ slow time, the reverse divisions double up in quick time and “ resume the step of the pivot division at the word *slow*.”

By the methods just explained, the line of pivots is preserved throughout, which indubitably presents advantages, and the contrivances offered are ingenious and new ; the manner of increasing the front, while on the march, is particularly unexceptionable.

<sup>63</sup> The principle of reducing the front by removing the files, to be thrown back, from the pivot side, is not acted upon in the F. E. and E. as (part ii. §. 61) it is ordered in it, that all breaking off by files, are to take place from the reverse flank ; was a column, however, thus successively thrown into file, the companies would individually stand inverted, for, although the regular order amongst the divisions would be preserved within itself, each company would have its right file on the left, and its left file on the right, but this may, even then, be readily remedied.

<sup>64</sup> F. R. Ecole de Peloton, Nos. 252, 275, for files ; Ecole de Peloton, 224, 241.

their mode of performing throughout, resembles that described in the late Rules and Regulations, but, in resuming the former front, it displays some differences, as the head division obliques, and, after uncovering that or those in rear, marks time till they come up and join it (*fig. 102 C*); by these means, the original ground, where it is executed from the halt, will not be taken up, and the process seems also somewhat less regular than that explained before; yet the direction, which stops the progress in front, is not unfavourable. Their manner of operating by files does not materially differ from ours, as they are in the same way brought to the rear, *en potence*, it still varies from it by those withdrawn, not turning inwards, but merely marking the step, until they are cleared on the flank, when they incline, instead of wheeling to the rear; however, as it is permitted to remove the files of both extremities, at the same time, the movement is less precise in its rules than that of the British, where it is restricted to a flank; this defect is very perceptible whenever the reduction leaves the front under six files, as to comply with the intention, the whole of those on the reverse side are then obliged to be brought up again, in order to operate all together on the pivot side, a circumstance noticed in the French Reglement, and of immediate necessity, as the double movement in rear of both flanks, by covering six files, must render a reduction below that number, inadmissible.

In those particulars of reduction and augmentation of front, what has been explained for the French, likewise applies to the troops of the Netherlands.<sup>65</sup>

As for the Prussians,<sup>66</sup> as well as the Russians, they execute again on the principles directed by the late Rules and Regulations, and as practised by the French, namely, on the reverse flank; only as their mode of obliquing enables them to keep up, while increasing the front, the inclined march till they have joined the division they are to unite to, it admits of a more simple performance: by the Prussians it is, besides, ordered, that, where it occurs successively, the commands are to be delivered by the platoon chiefs; but that, where simultaneous, it is performed by the whole battalion at once, the words are to be given by the battalion commander.

In the Austrian Infantry, a principle feature in all augmentations of front consists, in their invariably occurring from the halt.<sup>67</sup> Reductions, if merely momentary, are recommended to be effected by the reverse side giving way; in the double column they take place behind both flanks; in the single column, the recovery or increase of front is accordingly performed by the rear divisions, that, by the oblique step, incline to the reverse, or to

<sup>65</sup> R. I. der N. pelotons school, 224—241; 252—275.

<sup>66</sup> P. R. absch. iii. kap. vii. § 8.

<sup>67</sup> A. R. haupt ii. absch. xii. § 1, 4, and 5.

the pivot side, while those in front stand still ; this is the manner in which, at least, a column of *zugen* is converted into columns of half companies, that of half companies into a column of companies, and the latter into that of divisions ; or even a column of *zugen* is at once augmented to the front of division, for above that breadth, and for that of battalion, the obliques *deploirung* (a movement somewhat like our oblique echelon, and as seen in right wing of *fig. 84*) are employed ; and lastly, were a column of battalions to take up a general line, the corps, after closing at half division, or what is the same, company's distance, would wheel by half divisions to the right, or left, according to the side their relative situations direct, and, when thus in column, march straight forward till cleared in front ; when they halt, wheel up, and advance successively by *zugen* (platoons) on the line, to take each post next to the neighbouring battalion, already fixed in the alignment. In the double column, as the reduction takes place from both flanks, the rear parts, in moving up, separate from the centre, to regain their positions on each side of the body to which they are to unite ; this is again effected by the inclined march, as long as the operating front is not above that of division, but if more extended, the fractional parts that are to come up, must deploy *aufmarch*.

The necessity for a cessation of march when the front is undergoing augmentation, not being repeated for a decrease, will allow the latter to happen

during progress. Were a battalion in line to break into a column of divisions, which is the illustration adduced in the Austrian Reglement; on the caution, the advanced colour, flank captains, &c. stop their march to await the arrival of the line, in order to fall back in the same, while the supernumeraries step out to join the ranks; on the command *march*, the directing division continues to move on while the others oblique (performing this as customary, by gaining more ground to the front than to the side), until they cover that in front, when they, in turn, receive the injunction to resume the perpendicular direction; in a like manner, is a column of divisions reduced to half divisions or companies, one of companies to half companies, and the latter into a column of *zugen*. For the double column, the centre advances, and the fractional parts on both extremities, that are to fall back, mark-time till uncovered in their flanks, when, by the oblique step, they join and unite in rear.

When the diminution takes place from the halt, the parts brought back, perform, as it was customary in the British infantry, that is to say, after facing, they file into their respective situations. For the front of division it is the adjutant who successively is to mark the place where each of them is to arrive, but this duty devolves on non-commissioned officers, when the performance is by smaller portions of the battalion.

In the Danish army, when an increase takes place, the column, as by the Austrians, is first



halted, but the head section is then ordered to incline to the reverse side, while the rear one obliques to the pivot; when the latter is cleared in front, it receives the word to move forwards, which, on being heard, is immediately repeated to that of formation; this latter then continues to step in the ordinary, while the other comes up in the quick time, both are halted on joining; should an immediate advance, therefore, be desired, it is announced by the word *march*, delivered by the battalion chief, so soon as the augmentation is effected; were such an operation, however, required, while already on the alignment, the parts formed upon would stand fast, while those in rear would oblique till in line with them; as that latter mode is somewhat of a slower execution, it is only countenanced in those cases which preclude the speedier performance, as, by counteracting rapidity, it offends the feature chiefly aimed at in the Danish system. From the preceding, the following rules will occur as essential in the evolutions by which the front of the open column is either increased or decreased.

*First*, As the movement by the fractional parts is more regular, and less inclined to betray into extension, than that effected by files, increases or decreases in the front of a column should, if for any duration, be performed by the various parts of the battalion that break off or move up again.

*Second*, Were the decrease is inconsiderable and momentary, it might be allowed by files, which, as required, are then thrown back, or brought up;

according as troops stand two or three deep ; a division may, by this means, be reduced to two or three files.

*Third,* Were a defile so narrow as to admit but three a-breast, the divisions, as they approach, may turn on the march, and pass in file, or wheel by threes, and thus pursue their march.

*Fourth,* Were a passage so confined, as to permit the moving of the body but in rank entire, the divisions are again, on drawing near, to turn, and in wheeling to the front, to proceed in file till they reach the contracted spot, which they may enter then either by ranks or by files ; both those contrivances have their favourable as well as their unfavourable sides, but of the two, that by ranks is so far preferable, that, on leaving the defile in rear, the front rank, although unsupported, can, so soon as disengaged, form, and act according to circumstances ; however, if so, the manner should be confined to the companies, and so that, in each, the second and third ranks follow successively the first before the next division moves through ; this, by steering a middle course, secures, in a great measure, the advantages derived here from the execution both by files and by ranks.

*Fifth,* The centre evolutions, as well as all those interfering with the natural order and interior arrangement of the column (*fig.* 97, 98, 99, 100, 101), should never be referred to.

*Sixth,* As the divisions in rear, when increasing, have to pace over the diagonal, and therefore, to

move over more ground than those a-head on which they are to form, the latter must, in their advance, be restricted to the slow time, but greater precision and steadiness in the execution will however be derived, from those increases of front, as it is customary by the Austrians, being taken from the halt.

*Seventh,* As the removal of files from both flanks (*fig. 109*), will not admit of a reduction under six files, and, that where the files merely double in rear (*fig. 107*), a reduction of half the front is only attainable, the placing of them *en potence* (*fig. 108*), behind a single flank, pleads, evidently, eligibility.

*Eighth,* Diminutions of front should, as much as circumstances can allow, be accomplished about 15 paces from the spot they are required.

*Ninth,* As the march in column is facilitated by its being performed on an increased front, the original position, after a reduction has taken place, is to be recovered so soon as the obstacle which occasioned it has been left behind.

*Tenth,* Unless particular reasons direct to the contrary, all alterations in the front of a column should be performed by battalions, as, if performed successively by divisions, (whether by the operation the column be increased or diminished) they have a tendency to occasion extension.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>68</sup> This alludes to the increase or decrease by subdivisions, or sections, as, where it occurs by files, it is always successively executed,

*Eleventh*, In a column of the line these operations are, however, to be restricted to that by corps, which each performs the desired change as it gains the ground at which the one a-head of all originally underwent alteration.<sup>69</sup>

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## SECTION X.

### *Changes of Position when in open Column.*<sup>70</sup>

The principal and almost sole purpose of the evolution here designed to undergo examination, is its application to the changes in the position of a line. The utility of this manœuvre thus established, the next point under consideration seems to be,

and by every division as it reaches the spot which demands the alteration.

<sup>69</sup> In the execution of those movements, it may be further remarked, that where they occur by the fractional parts, it is preferable for the rear-divisions, in coming up, to keep in the oblique until they join that in front, as it is customary with the Prussians, as by avoiding the rapid succession of commands (*right oblique forwards*, &c.) it is of an easier performance and less liable to create disorder: in breaking off by files, the mode of facing inwards to wheel the files to the rear, as practised by the British, seems calculated to secure greater precision in the operation than where without facing they mark-time to oblique in rear, particularly if several files are at the same time to be thrown back.

<sup>70</sup> R. and R. part iii. § 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135; part iv. § 180, No. 18, 21, § 182, 183, 184, 185, 186.

to reduce it under some classification, so that the numberless shades of difference it admits, may be brought within the few evolutions which exhibit immediate dissimilitude in the performance; hence, it will be found that they may all be ranged under two general heads, where they occur on a fixed or on a distant point, and that these again, undergoing subdivisions, may be separately classed when on a fixed point; 1st, as they take place on the head (*fig. 114, 115*); 2nd, on a rear (*fig. 116*); and 3rd, on a central division (*fig. 117*); and that, besides, the column, under those three cases, may either be advanced or retired by the operation, that when to a distant ground, the same may be, 1st, in the continuation of the line occupied (*fig. 118*); 2nd, parallel (*fig. 119*); and 3rd, oblique to it (*fig. 120*); and that those three latter again admit of the modification:—if in the prolongation, to be, 1st, to the front (*fig. 118 A*); 2nd, to the rear B: if parallel, 1st, to the pivot (*fig. 119 A*); 2nd, to the reverse side B; and, that still greater variety offers itself among those comprehended within the obliques, as they may, 1st, outflank a-head, while the point of intersection is towards the same side (a);<sup>21</sup> 2nd, outflank a-head while the point of intersection is to the contrary side (b); 3rd, outflank to the rear while the point of intersection is also to the same side (c); and 4th, while outflanking to

<sup>21</sup> The point of intersection A (*fig. 133*), is the name given to that where the two lines representing the old and new positions, when prolonged, meet and cut each other.

the rear, the point of intersection be to the front (d); and those four circumstances all be repeated, so that the new position be taken up towards the pivot, as well as to the reverse side of the column (*fig. 120*).

Now, as these constitute the whole of the changes to which an open column is liable in its position,<sup>72</sup> their elucidations will complete the desirable information respecting those manœuvres. In proceeding to fulfil this intention, we will follow the order in which those movements appeared on inquiry; and of those performed on a fixed point, begin, therefore, by that where it takes place on the head division.

<sup>72</sup> The various changes a column is liable to, may be enumerated as follows:—

On a fixed point:

On the head division, when the line is advanced or retired,  
*fig. 114, 115* ..... 2

On a rear division, when the line is advanced or retired, *fig.*  
116 ..... 2

On a central division, as the wing in front is either advanced  
or retired, *fig. 117* ..... 2

On a distant point:

In the prolongation to the front, or to the rear, *fig. 118* .... 2

In a parallel position to the pivot or reverse flank, *fig. 119* .. 2

In an oblique or perpendicular, 1st, to out-flank to the front, the point of intersection, also, to be to the front (a), *fig. 120*; 2nd, to outflank to the front when the point of intersection is to the rear (b); 3rd, to outflank to the rear, and intersection to be to the front (d); and 4th, to outflank to the rear when the intersection is also to the rear (e); those four cases on the pivot side, and on the reverse flank ..... 8

When it is intended on the front division; whether it be the right or the left which lead, that front division is first wheeled, so as to be brought with its pivot on the new direction (*fig. 114*), it is, therefore, wheeled back on its pivot flank if the new position be advanced, and forwards on the same if retired (*fig. 115*); when properly situated, an officer, or non-commissioned officer (b), is thrown out at about 20 or 30 paces in front, to determine the new line of pivots, and a rear object (c) is likewise ascertained for correction; thus in readiness, the remaining companies or divisions, are made to face to the pivot, or reverse side, as the case may require, and in file, marched to their respective serjeants, who, while they were still at about 20 or 30 paces from the new ground, left each his division to run out, and mark the spot on the new alignment, where his own officer is to be placed, and where, of course, the pivot file of his division is to arrive and to close to. The divisions, on gaining their situations, are halted, fronted, and dressed by their platoon commanders, who, after those several duties have been completed, take their stations in column by replacing their serjeants, who now, on being relieved, fall back (to cover their platoon leaders) in the rear rank.

Were the last division executed upon, the column must be, in the first instance, counter-marched by divisions in files, which, by fronting the whole to the former rear, will admit afterwards of the re-

petition of a similar performance to that described, where it recurs on the leading division (*fig. 116*) ; when the alteration has been effected, and the desired situation is obtained, the column may either preserve its present position, or, by the application of a second counter-march, resume its former front.

The next evolution, of which it now becomes us to speak, is where a central part is to regulate ; where this is designed, the division so nominated, is first wheeled as desired, and a serjeant of each of the two adjoining divisions (of that in front and of that in rear) is posted on the new line (*fig. 117*) ; it is by covering those three points, that the remaining serjeants take up the new alignement, except these, particularly of the placing of the two serjeants as just mentioned, the movement offers no novelty, as it partakes of the double execution, where it is accomplished on a-head or on a rear division, and the several parts operate according as they stand before or behind that of formation. Those in front, therefore, first counter-march, the whole then face to their present right or left, and (owing to the counter-march of those in front) all to the same side,<sup>23</sup> to file into their desired situations into which they

<sup>23</sup> This is easily accounted for in the counter-march, performed by those in front, which has interchanged their flanks, and brought their right on the line their left was, and is still in those divisions in rear that have not been displaced ; they must, therefore, all face and file to the same side, in order to proceed to the contrary way.



are fixed by their platoon chiefs, in the mode already explained.

Before proceeding further, it will, perhaps, not be improper to pause, in order to say something of the manner in which the divisions, when in column, file to an alignement, for as we have seen that those flank movements present the two-fold instances of the motion, which is led by the pivot and by the reverse flank; some difference must naturally occur from this circumstance, and from its being the pivot, or the reverse file, which first approaches the posted serjeant. Thus, when the facing and the flank motion are to the pivot, and the new ground is entered by the reverse side of the column (*fig. 121*), the platoon commander, in leading his division, marches up to his serjeant, but in reaching him, stepping behind, he closes his pivot file on the planted non-commissioned officer, and he immediately delivers the commands *halt*, *front-dress* to his men: but were the motion to the reverse flank, as the new position is then gained by the pivot side (*fig. 122*), the platoon commander, as soon as he arrives at his serjeant, stops himself, and permitting his division to move on behind the side marker, he awaits to see the last file (here the proper pivot file) in the act of passing, to pronounce his words *halt*, *front-dress*, when posting the said pivot man next and beyond the non-commissioned officer, he (the officer), on those two points, dresses his platoon.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>74</sup> It would hardly be necessary, here to repeat the caution already given to the leaders of divisions, while moving by a flank, not to

In concluding what refers to those movements on a fixed point, I must observe that, as they operate on the open column in the like manner the wheelings do on the line, the open column must be brought in a perpendicular position to that it stood before, whenever the alteration, experienced by the regulating division, amounts to the quarter of a circle, and that the alteration must be more or less considerable according as the arch traced out by it is greater or less extended.

overshoot the line of dress, while on the march; were the present evolution not peculiarly favourable to exhibit the evil tendencies, to which such an ill timed celerity would lead in practice, for as the serjeants, in marking the ground, take post in rotation; should a division in rear, by hurrying on, push beyond its neighbouring one on the regulated hand, and reach its destination, before the serjeant has had time to point it out properly, an irregular formation would probably result from it, and much time be wasted in tedious correction, where very little or none could be gained from the principle that is overruled and motion precipitated. In military affairs, it is neither the individual, nor the division that arrives the first, that promotes execution, but it is the individual or division, that acting appropriately in the combined movement, joins at the appointed instant: that in contributing to the performance of the general manœuvre, nay even to its promptitude, shares in the success of the day. The clock which strikes too soon, is as wrong as that which strikes too late; it is the one which keeps its proper time only that is truly useful to its possessor.

This defect, in the officer hurrying over the line of dress, would still become more injurious; were the serjeants prevented from taking post on the alignment, previous to the arrival of their divisions, as the taking up of the position would then entirely depend upon the officers. Respecting those filings, it is further to be said, that as the perpendicular entry into the new position is an object, much to be

In proceeding to those changes, classed under the second head, the removal to a distant ground, we will begin by those in the prolongation. As they are, however, accomplished by the march in column (*fig. 118*), they will need no further explanation, it is yet to be remarked, that where the new position is to the rear, the intention may be fulfilled, either by the whole, that, after facing about, step, with the rear rank in front, to the new ground, or by the column, which, first changing its front by the counter-march of divisions, in files, thus facing, proceeds straight forwards to its former rear:<sup>75</sup> and no greater difficulty will be experienced when the new position is parallel than where it is in the prolongation, since it will then merely demand the application of the flank march for completion,

wished for, where possible, the straight direction should be assumed, about fifteen paces before the new ground is approached; the serjeants are allowed to leave their platoons also, when still at 30 or 40 paces, and finally in taking post, it is to be remembered that the mistake of a serjeant, where he inclines within the line of dress is attended with less inconvenience than if he had bulked out and beyond the proper position, as by the former error the line of formation will be retired, but, what is infinitely worse, a wing be thrown forward by the latter; nor would the performance present the same facility, since the following divisions, when they take their stations, would find, by the first the points left open, and by the second obscured.

<sup>75</sup> When the intention is to resume the former front, so soon as a retired position is taken up, the facing about will answer best; but were a column meant to remain fronted to the rear, the counter-march of divisions, by files, will be more appropriate.

as a view of *fig. 119* will readily illustrate.<sup>76</sup> The commander, by regulating the advance of the directing with a neighbouring division, may, by either keeping the outward back or bringing it up, gradually and insensibly move the column round, and thus gain a position nearly, though not strictly, parallel to that previously occupied.

To the oblique alterations, the aid of the march in column must be equally called for, nor will the evolution present any variety from the relative position of the lines taken up, since it is the direction of march alone, and not the execution, which, by it, will undergo modification. Still a difference exists here in the mode of entry, for the alignement may be approached by the spot where the head, the rear, or any central part of the column is to be placed.

When a column arrives by the spot where its head is to be stationed (*fig. 123*), on reaching that point the progress ceases; the leading division is wheeled, or perhaps filed, into its new situation.<sup>77</sup> The remaining divisions are then faced, and by the flank-march brought in their relative positions in its rear, marked, as before explained, by their serjeants, who, for that purpose, have been dis-

<sup>76</sup> See chap. vi. § 6.

<sup>77</sup> Should a column arrive at a spot somewhat removed from the place, the leading division is to be posted, that division might, either at first file singly into its intended position, or perform with the rest, and the whole battalion gain the new situation, on the principle of the flank-march, in open column.

patched when they were still within 20 or 30 paces from their new ground. An advanced officer, or non-commissioned officer (*b*), is also planted to determine the new line, and a distant object in rear, if there is one, ascertained to regulate the correction.

Were the second circumstance the existing case, and the approach made by the spot destined to be occupied by the rear of the column, the entry by the successive wheel of the divisions becomes the appropriate manœuvre; the posting of the adjutant, or field officer, at the point of alteration, the two objects a-head, to direct the march after gaining the new alignment, and every other particular enumerated, where those alterations in the direction of the march of an open column have been delineated (*fig. 125, 27 R*), being attended to as described.<sup>78</sup>

Finally, were a column to arrive on its new ground by the place where one of its central divisions is desired to rest; those a-head will successively wheel into the designed direction till that to be situated at the point of entry (for instance fifth division, *fig. 124*) has gained its position, by circling into the alignment; at this period the column is halted, and the divisions in rear, that are still not on the line, are faced and filed in their appropriate places behind those already posted; they therefore behave as explained for the movement, where it recurs on the head division, to which the evolution, so far as it relates to them, and, after

<sup>78</sup> See chap. vi. § 5.

the column has halted, bears every affinity, whilst for the divisions in front, the movement offers no difference from where the approach is effected by the rear of the position.

Having fully described those changes in the position of a column, for a single battalion, it will be necessary also to present them on a larger scale, and as occurring in a column of the line, consisting of several of them; this, however will nearly amount to a repetition of what has been said before; the principal distinctive feature, the operations then exhibit, consisting merely in the several corps that immediately break into separate columns, and, except the regulating one, all march to their adjutants, who, on the general line, have been forwarded, to mark the ground where the rear of their respective battalions, are to be situated; however, to display the process of those combined movements, and render them familiar, I shall briefly relate the various cases which tend to vary somewhat their performances.

Were the manœuvre, for instance, to be effected on a fixed point, the flank division of a battalion, though not the leading division of the whole, the corps in front of that performed upon, countermarch by divisions, in file (*fig. 126*); the named flank division is then wheeled, or placed as required, while the remaining divisions of the same battalion file in its rear, as explained for a single corps when it thus operates on its head division. The other battalions which, owing to the preparatory counter-march of those in front, are now brough

all to face that of direction, step off in separate columns, each to its own adjutant, who, in the general line, has taken his station where his rear division is to rest,<sup>79</sup> on reaching their adjutants, the battalions gain their positions by the regular entry of the divisions, which successively wheel in, and which, while thus forming independantly by corps, are made to cover each other, and all of them those of the regulating battalion, in the new alignment. However, instead of stepping to their posted mounted officers, the corps might have also proceeded each to the spot where its head is to rest; which ground, if so required, is marked, and will be readily known by the position of the adjutant of the preceding battalion, who is displaying the rear point of its own. When the battalion column thus approaches its ground, the operation will, of course, be reduced to that described where a single corps removes into its position, by performing on its leading division.

Should, instead of a flank, a central division, be appointed to direct the general movement, the new alignment is first ascertained and prolonged, while the whole of the divisions, a-head of that denominated to regulate, counter-march by files. That centre company, or divisions, is then properly fixed, the remaining divisions of the corps to which it belongs, as well as those of the two adjoining battalions on each side of it, face and

<sup>79</sup> It is to be recollected, that by F. E. and E. the adjutant is posted where the head division of his corps is to take post, the rear may be marked by a field officer, part v. § 136, No. 7.

file into their relative situations, and, with the exception of those three battalions, the others break again in separate columns to direct each its course, either to its own adjutant, or to the ground where its leading division is to be placed, and performs accordingly (*fig. 127*).

Now, lastly, was a rear flank division acted upon, all those in front will have to counter-march by divisions, in files; the selected division to regulate will then be posted, while the others belonging to the corps that directs, will resume their column position, by facing and filing. As to the other battalions, they break, as customary, in separate columns, to move to their respective adjutants, or mounted officers.

It will evidently appear, that whenever a first counter-march has been performed by the divisions a-head to face the regulating point, a second counter-march must, after the designed change has been effected, become indispensable to replace the column, as it stood before, and face all its successive parts to the same side, but it does not follow, however, as a matter of course, that those, which originally thus altered their front, are to repeat the evolution; for were the intention to place, or to move, the column to the contrary way, and rear it faced before, it would be those which had preserved their positions which would then have to submit to the change of front, and have to counter-march, in order to comply with the intention.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Were it meant immediately after the column had performed its central alteration, to re-form the line, that second counter-march



Where it is the removal to a distant position, which is the manœuvre required, no greater intricacy than where on a fixed point recurs from several corps acting in conjunction; since, of the three various cases of which it then admits, it is devoid of any difference for the first, where the new position is in the continuation (*fig. 128*), as the march in column, when performed by a battalion in column or by a column of the line, remains perfectly the same, and that the variety it offers, where the new position is either parallel or oblique to that abandoned, is very inconsiderable, and chiefly consisting in the battalions, except that immediately acted upon, that diverge, as described, to move se-

might be saved by the division, immediately in front of that of direction which takes up a double distance, namely, for itself, and that regulating, as the whole of the divisions may then convert into line by wheeling inwards, and towards that of direction. If an immediate advance towards the original front, after the alteration had been effected, demand, however, the performance of a second counter-march, time may be spared by the divisions, as well as the battalions, preceding the directing body, merely facing about instead of counter-marching, and thus, the rear rank in front, proceeding to the new position, which, when taken up, they resume the proper disposition at the words *halt-front*; nor can the reversed position of the ranks, when taking post by divisions, or while on the march by battalion columns, be well produced to thwart the expedient here proposed, since, unless troops have been very indifferently trained to their exercise, this deviation from the true front can lead to no inconvenience. The operation, except in the reversed position of ranks, would offer no difference from that described: no double distance would, of course, be taken by the division immediately in front of that directing the evolution.

parately to their ground. Were a parallel line to be taken up by a column of two or three battalions, it would operate as a single corps, consequently all the divisions would face, and by the flank march, file into their new situations (*fig. 129*); but should this number be exceeded, owing to the difficulty the flank movement presents, where attempted on a more considerable front than that of three battalions, those above it would separate, and thus, in individual columns, march each to its adjutant, who marks the rear, or, leaving him to a flank, gain the spot where its head is to be stationed.

Now, were the position oblique to that relinquished, and the ground approached by the spot designed for the leading division, the head battalion takes post as already explained for a single corps, when situated under the same circumstance of approach by the head, while the others, in detached columns proceed to their adjutants (*fig. 130*); and were the new line oblique, but the general column to arrive by the rear, the new direction would be taken up by the successive wheel of the divisions (*fig. 131*): and finally, were the march so contrived as to meet the new line by a central point, a compound operation of the two described before, and where it recurs on a front and on a rear division, would take place; the divisions a-head would have to circle successively in the desired direction, till that placed at the point of entry, had taken up its ground by wheeling into the alignement, at which period, as

that a-head of all must have likewise gained its position, a cessation in the advance would be directed, and the formation completed by the surplus of the divisions of the corps partly entered, as well as all those of the battalion immediately following (5th battalion in *fig. 132*), filing into their new situations, while the rest of the battalions, if there be any still behind, break individually, to move in battalion columns, each to the spot its rear or its head, is to be fixed.<sup>81</sup>

#### CONCLUSION AND CHOICE.

The various movements detailed for the changes in the position of an open column, as far as they refer to the battalion, by applying each to a peculiar and different case, can admit of no preference ; it is the circumstances under which they are performed, and relative position designed to be taken up, which can alone determine their application ; it is, therefore, when executed by a column of the line only, that any selection is admissible, by enjoining the battalions, after breaking off and moving separately, either to gain the places where their heads or their rears are to rest, for of the two, the first is evidently the shorter, and the latter the more regular, and perhaps the safer expedient from

<sup>81</sup> Although every change in the position of an open column might be effected by the application of the described evolutions, two additional modes are offered in the late Rules and Regulations, under sections 185 and 186, they have been inserted in chap. xi. § 6, in which the alterations in the positions of a line are described.

described amongst the elementary movements,<sup>23</sup> the divisions, as there directed, are each halted, fronted, and dressed at the voice of its own leader; by this manœuvre the divisions are brought back on the very ground they started from, but faced to the contrary way; the right flank is removed by it to the spot formerly occupied by the left, and the left by that previously taken up by the right; the identical line of pivots is preserved, but in every division, shifted to the contrary flank.

It is to be noticed here, that where the divisions are of unequal strength, although the original ground of the column will be preserved, the relative distances amongst the successive parts will no longer be true after the change of front is completed; thus, for instance, the space *a b* (*fig.* 143), previously designed to contain the division *a* will evidently, by the evolution, be brought in its rear, and therefore no longer be intended for *a*, but for *b*, and accordingly not suit where *a* and *b* are not of the same number of files; subsequent arrangements after counter-marching, will, of course, become indispensable, before such an unequalized column can wheel into line; should, however, the emergency of the moment not allow the sufficient time this correction demands, and the approaching enemy compel to instantaneous formation, the wheeling of divisions backwards on the reverse flank, would be the safest expedient for the immediate restoring of the line.

<sup>23</sup> Chap. v. § 19.

*Counter-march of the Column.<sup>24</sup>*

Were the preceding circumstance of removal to the rear now accompanied with the necessity of a removal also of the line of pivots, and the enemy at E instead of D. (*fig. 134*), the successive wheeling of divisions to the former rear would meet with its application; the head division, therefore, would immediately trace out a half circle, either on a fixed or a moveable pivot, but always towards the reverse flank, and on completing the half circular motion, resume the march straight forwards, while the other divisions may either proceed to the spot the head stood, and there step over the circumference, to follow the exact track traced out by the first (*fig. 145*), or stand still to await till those in front have passed, to perform in turn and wheel behind them (*fig. 144*); this second method saves the unnecessary ground the rear divisions are brought over by the first, but removes the column of its own depth to the front.

When this manœuvre is required from a column of the line, it will, in all probability, take place by

<sup>24</sup> The evolution called counter-march of divisions by files, is represented in *fig. 143*, the counter-march of divisions or change of wings in *fig. 135*, by it the column alters its pivot flank, without altering its line of march. The counter-march of the column is that (*fig. 144*), where manœuvring in its entire, both the direction of march and line of pivots, are influenced and changed by the evolution to the contrary side, though the identical pivot men remain the same.

battalions, as the purpose is equally answered, where it is restrained to corps, while loss of time, without any beneficial circumstances to atone for it; and, if kept in motion, according to *fig. 145*, additional fatigue will merely attend the performance throughout.

Where this is practised by corps, and from the halt, this movement might still be simplified by the remaining divisions, so soon as the leading ones wheel into the new direction, tracing out themselves a quarter circle, so as to present a line, which, facing that of march, will enable them successively, as those in their front have passed by, readily by a second arch of 90 degrees, to assume the column position. By this manœuvre, the direction of march, as well as the line of formation, is altered, but the identical pivot-men remain the same as before, while, by the counter-march of divisions by files, the line of formation, and consequently that of pivots, is kept to the original side; but the pivot man himself is in every division removed to the contrary flank.

Another manner of accomplishing this two-fold intention of facing to the rear, and of alteration in the line of pivots to the contrary side, we owe to the Russians, who perform it as follows: after the divisions are all divided by their centre, in two, the halves situated on the reverse flank, are faced about, and thus, standing in two columns, fronting in a contrary way (*fig. 146*), the whole is put in motion, so that the half divisions in following

one another, individually trace out the semi-circumference of an oval, by moving along the very ground the column occupies. When these half circular evolutions are completed, as the separate parts belonging to the same division meet again, the column is halted, and those half divisions, which have originally faced about, are fronted, which completes the intention. To facilitate execution herein, the adjutant may take post where the leading officer is to cease his advance, and halt his men; during process, attention ought likewise to be bestowed, that the cadence be preserved, so that the left and right half divisions join all at the same time<sup>95</sup>. Of these two methods, the first seems somewhat more regular, but the latter is evidently quicker and of a more general use, as applicable where the former, for want of room, becomes often impracticable; besides, as those movements are generally restricted in their performances to the single corps, the favourable feature the latter exhibits of operating within the existing position and ground might, where it takes place by a column of the line, present an additional claim to consideration.

<sup>95</sup> This movement is now sanctioned by authority and included in the F. E. and E. part iii. § 110; supposing the right to be in front, (*fig. 146.*), the commands directed are, *right subdivisions, right about face, right wheel, the half circle, quick march*; the platoon leaders would of course give, when required, the command *wheel or shoulder forwards*, and as their subdivisions join again, *halt, front-dress*, which latter command, if deemed expedient, might however be given by the battalion chief.

## CONCLUSION AND CHOICE.

From the preceding we may infer:

*First*, That when a column is to move in the direction which it faces, and the enemy is towards the pivot side, the march in column (*fig. 134*) will be the movement required.

*Second*, That where the direction is to the front, but the attack is expected on the reverse side of the column, the rear must be brought a-head by the movement, called change of wings, and that this, according as it is intended to continue the advance or to keep the ground presently occupied, must be executed by the first or second mode described (*fig. 135, 137*). Where there is certainty of no attack, the fifth and sixth methods (*fig. 140, 141*) might be substituted for them, and must be so, whenever the locality does not admit the moving abreast of two divisions.

*Third*, When the motion is to the rear, and the formation is desired to the same side as heretofore, the counter-march of divisions by files will become the appropriate evolution (*fig. 143*).

*Fourth*, Should the direction of march be intended to the contrary way, and the formation to the contrary side, the counter-march of the column, by the successive wheel of divisions to the rear, or the mode explained as practised by the Russians, will suit the case; the latter is preferable, as more expeditious. (*fig. 144, 145, 146.*)



*Fifth*, The above movements, unless it be for parade's sake, should all be restricted to the battalion execution, and invariably take place by corps in the column of the line.

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## SECTION XII.

*While in Column to open and to close Distances.*<sup>96</sup>

These operations, intended to convert an open into a close column, or from the close to regain the open formation, may, from their contrary intentions, as well as two-fold performance, be viewed as two distinct movements, blended under one head. We shall, accordingly, separate their delineations.

When the divisions from open, are to convert into close distance, there is, properly speaking, but one manner of effecting it, yet, as it may still take place on the head, the rear, as well as on any of the central platoons, the evolution still exhibits three various modes of performance ; no dissimilar circumstance here recurs from the right or left flank conducting, not even in the commands.

Were the closing of divisions to the front (*fig.* 148), and the requisite caution for it delivered, the head company stands still ; or, if on the march, is halted, and the others, continuing, or

<sup>96</sup> R. and R. part iii. § 138; No. 3, § 153.

being put in motion, move up till they approach each within a pace, or rather two, of that immediately preceding, and the progress of which has been just stopped before ; when thus closed, they are, at the word of their platoon leaders, *halt-dress*, arrested, and fixed in their respective new situations.

*Second*, When the movement is in the contrary direction and to the rear, (*fig. 149*) the column is likewise halted, and all the divisions, except the last which preserves its position, are faced about, and thus the third rank in front marched until each reaches within two paces (60 inches) of that before it, when, as it in turn so closes up, it is halted, fronted, and dressed by its own platoon leader.

*Lastly*, Were a central company selected to operate upon, the execution partakes of both the former evolutions ; it will, consequently, require from the divisions in rear, a performance similar to that explained where it takes place to the front ; and from those in front like that where it takes place to the rear ; the former will, accordingly, advance into their desired situations, while the latter, after facing about, will step to the rear, to gain their approached positions (*fig. 150*).

It is obvious that the rear, as well as the central performance, requires a cessation of march in the division of formation, but this is not immediately essential, when it takes place to the front, as the head of the column may be permitted to move in

the slow pace while the rear is closing up in the quick or quickest cadence.

Thus concluding what relates to the first movement, we shall take a view of the second, by which, from close column, the natural distance betwixt the divisions is resumed ; to accomplish this, the body, after it is first halted, receives the caution, *to form an open column' from the rear*, at which the head division is instantly ordered by its leader to advance in the ordinary or quick-time, and, on gaining its proper distance, is followed by the second ; that second, when it has left behind the proper separating space from the third, is, in the like manner, followed by the third ; the third, by the fourth ; and so on, is every division, at the word *march* of its leader, put in motion, as that in front takes the pace which completes the distance (*fig. 151*) ; as the division in rear of all receives that injunction, the column may be either allowed to proceed, or receive the appropriate command for a cessation of progress.

Yet, where this is performed on a rear division, the intention may be fulfilled by an evolution somewhat different from that just explained, for while the last division stands fast, the remainder may be put in motion, and stepping off together be successively halted, (beginning by that in rear of those on the march) each by the officer of the following platoon, if so performed ; for example, in the instance shown (*fig. 152*), the eighth division here in rear of the column preserves its position, while the others step

The third movement, which now comes under consideration, is, when the rear is brought a-head by marching through the centre of the divisions in front (*fig. 138*); when this is the evolution intended, after the column has been halted, and customary caution has been delivered, for the rear to move in front, all the divisions except the last, are directed to open from the middle, by taking a named number of side steps to the right and to the left, and sufficiently to clear the front of that in rear which does not move, and which, on finding itself thus uncovered, steps off to march between the separated divisions; as it leaves behind the seventh (the one immediately preceding it) the latter closes inwards, and, when re-formed, follows the eighth, now on the march before it, so soon as it has gained its proper distance; this, in rotation, is repeated by all of them, till that originally a-head, on joining again and stepping off, concludes the evolution.<sup>89</sup>

<sup>89</sup> The commands are here *the column will change wings' by the divisions marching through the centre; companies' to the right and left open—march*, and when they have done so sufficiently, *halt*, the rear officer then, and so soon as his front is cleared, orders his men to *march*, while the others receive in turn from their officers, the words *close inwards—march*, and when joined, *halt*, and *march* to follow in column. If the ground is to be preserved, the commandant gives additionally the directions *right about—face, march*, to those who have separated by the centre, and, when in rotation, they gain the ground the rear stood on, they recover the column position by the commands of their platoon leaders, *inwards—turn, front*,

That this operation is susceptible of a deviation, similar to that offered as the difference between the first and second methods, is obvious, as the divisions which have been split asunder, might afterwards face about, and with their third rank in front proceed to the rear (*fig. 139*), to turn inwards and re-form on the identical ground the last division stood before, and when thus re-formed, follow in column; this latter contrivance will enable the original ground to be preserved, but I apprehend it to be the only feature alleageable in its support, as already objectionable under its more simple structure, (*fig. 138*) it becomes, under the additional weight of facing and turning altogether inadmissible.

According to the fifth manner (*fig. 140*), the column is likewise halted, and the divisions, beginning by that in rear, are, by separating from the centre, successively brought in file to the front; the last division, is, accordingly, faced outwards, and, by files, moved along the right and left flanks of the column, until about ten paces beyond the

*march*; in this latter evolution, the leading division is ordered to step rather short.

In the French infantry, instead of opening by the side step, the half platoons wheel outwards from the centre, the semi-periphery, and so remain till those which were before in their rear, have passed by when they re-form and resume the column position by completing the circumference of the circle already partly traced out; as the two half platoons unite, eyes are glanced to the guide, and the company follows those already on the march; this is also practised by the Danes.

leading company when the platoon is re-formed, and as the two rear files join in the centre, it is ordered to resume the advance; this is followed up by the seventh, the sixth, &c. from the rear; as the second gains its position before the original leading one, the latter steps off, which concludes the movement.<sup>90</sup>

It is on a principle not unlike, that, the alteration is likewise effected by the sixth mode (*fig. 141*) only, that the whole of the wing in rear, then faces and files to the reverse side, while the divisions of the wing a-head, perform to the pivot flank, they, thus moving on the opposite side, interchange positions with each other; by this manœuvre the formal ground is not quitted, the movement is however somewhat too complicated to claim unlimited approbation, yet, was the execution; facilitated by serjeants, who mark the ground for the divisions as they relieve each other, the reproach

<sup>90</sup> This change of front in a column, by the filing of its divisions, might also be performed by the second, which immediately files and forms in front of the original leading one; the third then takes post before the second, and so on till the last takes up its new position a-head of all. I have preferred the movement to begin from the rear, not because the evolution is shorter by it, as some have erroneously advanced, and which is not the case, as the second division will, by this first manner, gain its position about the time the last does by the latter, but because the column by it is sooner brought into a state of defence, as the formation of the divisions takes place behind those already situated, which is not so by that here described in the note, in which, to gain their new positions, they are obliged to move to the front of those previously posted.

of intricacy seems much weakened.<sup>91</sup> When this movement is performed by an odd number of divisions, that in the centre stands still and preserves its original ground, but where the number is even, they will all have to partake of the motion.

Of those various ways of performing, the first is the simplest; the second is attended with additional trouble, but on the other hand it possesses the advantage of the preservation of ground, a consideration which, where it takes place by a column of the line, and where the corps operate by themselves, may, under certain conjunctures, become of moment; as to the third, it is neither easy nor of a nature to offer resistance if attacked during progress; difficult for a battalion it is impracticable for a line, in which the number of divisions to pass through, the artillery, and the ammunition would

<sup>91</sup> To prevent any difficulty in the performance of this movement, at the caution *to counter-march the divisions by the exchange of wings*, the covering-serjeant in every company, should immediately take post in rear of the officer, whose platoon his own is to change places with, so that, on leaving their ground, the leaders might at once judge where they are to conduct their men, and by replacing their dispatched serjeants, know where they are to take post themselves, as well as situate their pivot firelock men. In the F. E. and E. the following mode is inserted, and recommended for narrow ground: "upon the caution being given, *by double files from the centre, rear wing to the front*, the rear company will receive from its leader, the words *inwards face—by files from the centre—quick march*, and the subdivisions will immediately wheel "by files to the right and left; at the same time the commander of

create the utmost confusion, and yet this objection is much enfeebled from those changes of wings being generally confined to the battalion, and, therefore, not required to be prepared for a depth exceeding it. As several other objections may be stated which are not so readily removed, that manner of operating is inapplicable on service, and merely suited for the parade, where, amongst other movements of the same description, it may be preserved, and, under the denomination of *pretty manœuvres*, be occasionally practised in complaisance to the fair.<sup>92</sup>

“ the battalion will give the words to the remaining companies, *two*  
 “ *centre sections—outwards wheel—quick march*, and the rear com-  
 “ pany will advance through the centre of the battalion by the open-  
 “ ing formed by the wheel of sections; when the rear company shall  
 “ clear the centre of the front company of the column, its leader will  
 “ give the words *form company—forward*; each company will suc-  
 “ cessively follow in the same manner, and the moment that the flanks  
 “ of the sections which wheeled outwards, are cleared by the com-  
 “ pany which is to precede from the rear, the words *inwards face—*  
 “ *quick march*, will be given as before, the files of each subdivision  
 “ inclining towards each other as they advance, and the whole will  
 “ successively form to the front, and take up the march in column.”  
 Part iii. § 101.

<sup>92</sup> As those pretty movements are chiefly performed in compli-  
 ment to the ladies, it would be an unpardonable piece of ungallantry  
 to suppress them altogether from the body of the infantry movements;  
 this, therefore, I would never venture to recommend; the only  
 thing I pretend to insinuate is, that as they are not so nearly related  
 to what occurs on service, and appropriated to the field, those more  
 adapted for it should be taught in preference, and practised more  
 frequently, but if sufficiently impressed upon the mind of the



It is but just to add, however, that this third method may lay some claim to priority, as well as to speediness of completion, as a few steps are gained by it, and that it was almost universally used by the different infantries before the first explained was introduced.

As to the fifth and sixth, they betray the fault of leaving the battalion defenceless during process, as the confused state it is in at the time, and while on the move, must render every posture of defence impracticable; but in defiles, or on the high roads, where the standing of two divisions abreast is not always admissible, and in cases where no apprehension of disturbance exists, they may meet with their due applications, and, amongst themselves, be preferred, as either an immediate advance, or the preservation of the existing ground, be desired.

Where those evolutions are extended to the line, they offer no difference, for they are conducted on the same principles by a column of a single, and of several battalions; increased attention, however, becomes then requisite to meet the increased difficulty that results from the lengthened operation the repetition here exhibits, nor indeed could any, except the first, be employed with safety, particu-

soldiers, and known, there remains some spare time to be devoted to those showy evolutions, of the superfluous kind, they may meet with indulgence, and their performances be occasionally permitted to try the skill and steadiness of the officers and the men, which, from their being generally intricate and difficult, they are, most frequently, best calculated to display.

larly if the troops, as it must be the case here, are provided with artillery, ammunition, &c. Yet this exclusive adoption to the operations of the line is, in the present instance, but entitled to slight regard, as the change of wings of a column throughout, where it exceeds the battalion, is a movement never required, and always inappropriate, as the intention might be equally answered, where it consists of several corps, by each of them performing within itself; nor can any cogent reason be assigned, to countenance the contrary execution, by performing the manœuvre by brigades, or by the whole line; for, provided the intention be complied with, and the opposite flank in every corps be brought ahead, it little matters which of them, by occupying the right, leads or closes the general column. It is with great propriety that some attention is paid to the priority and the privileges of particular regiments on a parade, nay, even on service, so long as from it no inconvenience be derived; these honours of precedence spring from a root the army is too much fed upon not to be secured from neglect; but spurious, they lose their genuine purity, and with it all claim to regard, whenever, degenerating into punctilio of rank, they are attempted to be supported at the hazard of committing the army, and endangering the state: true honour consists not in confining ourselves to the completion of particular duties, but to the performance of all those which, in the hour of danger, it is in our power to accomplish for the welfare of the country. When the

Tegæates contended with the Athenians the privilege of taking the right of the army at Plataea, the latter replied to the Lacedæmonians, that it was of little moment to them what part of the field of battle they were destined to act, as they were fully aware that any spot in it might become conspicuous, when filled by brave and resolute men, and that, wherever they were situated, they trusted it would redound to their fame, and to the glory of Athens. This is the language of soldiers and patriots; and it is of men, possessing such sentiments, that an army only should be composed.

But leaving this digression, perhaps too long, to return to our subject, we will proceed to the third case alluded to before, where the movement is to the rear, while the enemy is supposed on the pivot side (*fig. 134*). This will lead us to explain the counter-march of divisions by files, here the appropriate movement.

#### *Counter-march of Divisions by Files.*

As the caution is given that the *battalion* (or *line*) *will countermarch its divisions by files* (for no difference arises as to the execution in either instance), it is followed by the word *right or left-face*, but always to the reverse side, and then, by the command *quick-march*, at which, the files wheel short round the front rank, and every division behaves as explained where this movement is

described amongst the elementary movements,<sup>93</sup> the divisions, as there directed, are each halted, fronted, and dressed at the voice of its own leader ; by this manœuvre the divisions are brought back on the very ground they started from, but faced to the contrary way ; the right flank is removed by it to the spot formerly occupied by the left, and the left by that previously taken up by the right ; the identical line of pivots is preserved, but in the divisions, shifted to the contrary flank.

It is to be noticed here, that where the divisions are of unequal strength, although the original ground of the column will be preserved, the relative distances amongst the successive parts will no longer be true after the change of front is completed : thus, for instance, the space a b (*fig. 143*), previously designed to contain the division a, will evidently, by the evolution, be brought in its rear, and therefore no longer be intended for a, but for b, and accordingly not suit where a and b are not of the same number of files ; subsequent arrangements after counter-marching, will, of course, become indispensable, before such an unequalized column can wheel into line ; should, however, the emergency of the moment not allow the sufficient time this correction would demand, and the approaching enemy compel to instantaneous formation, the wheeling of divisions backwards on the reverse flank, would be the safest expedient for the immediate restoring of the line.

<sup>93</sup> Chap. v. § 19

mation, the men will talk, lock-up, and mix the ranks, and so prodigious will often be the pressure, that it will sometimes cause the flanks to split asunder and burst; that this is confirmed by repeated experience, must be admitted: General Feuquieres relates, that in the Battle of Nerwinden, at the attack of the village of that name, where he in person commanded a part of the troops, the position was seven times carried, and seven times relinquished, merely, says he, because the successful columns were in so disorderly a state as not to be capable of taking post, and of manœuvring according to circumstances, and much less able to resist any feeble attack;\* to obviate these evils, or,

\* These reflections are chiefly drawn from the works of Guibert (*Défence du Système de Guerre*, vol. i. part ii. chap. iii; and *Essai Général de Tactique*, vol. i. infanterie, chap. viii. § 2), who acknowledges himself to be chiefly indebted for them to the Comte de Vaux, he who reduced the Island of Corsica to the power of the king of France. This topick of formation, with the several arguments adduced at the time, for and against the deep order, is fully illustrated in the *Défense du Système de Guerre*, a work Guibert wrote when at a maturer age than his *Essai Général de Tactique*, and which, though not of the same magnitude as that first produced, in general abounds with much more solid information. For those who desire to obtain a complete acquaintance respecting the arraying of the infantry, a perusal of the *Influence de la Poudre à Canon*, by Mauvillon, will be particularly desirable, and much is to be learnt in the excellent chapter vi. of *Considérations sur l'Art de la Guerre*, by Rogniat, in which the French general, by a happy discrimination between contest and march, brought the question under a new light, and by referring to the extended or deep position, as the one or the other prevails in the action, exposes a theory which most satisfactorily determines the appropriate applications of the line and the mass.

at least to lessen the defects attending the compact position, the original succession kept up in the line is strongly recommended to be preserved in the column, so that the divisions in it, by following in the same rotation they are placed next to each other when in the extended formation, may more readily know their positions, and that in the event of distress, it may facilitate the restoration of order.

Besides this weighty consideration, reverting to general construction, a happy discrimination in the posting of the officers and non-commissioned officers may be here of great service, as, by taking their stations on the flanks, and among their men, they may watch over them, and by preventing their growing either too eager or too careless, considerably check the intermixture of ranks, which latter, is still guarded against, by a certain space which is allowed to be left between the successive bodies,<sup>3</sup> nor can the attention here bestowed, be too great, since, where the conjecture dictates the necessity for the mass, the mass cannot be supplied by any other disposition ; for instance, what

<sup>3</sup> Besides the regular succession, Guibert (*Defense du Systeme de Guerre*, vol. i. part ii. chap. iii.) seems to wish, that each flank should be marked by an officer, or non-commissioned officer, and that some of them should be placed in front as well as in rear of every division; to obviate still farther the intermixture of ranks, he proposes also, that the distances betwixt the following bodies be increased to three paces ; these expedients are all introduced in the French Reglement of 1791, that still in force, and chiefly of his compilation.

would be less effectual than the attempt of forcing an intrenchment in line, in which the difficulty of advance, the weakness throughout, and general exposure, would, without leaving any chance of success, place the troops under certain destruction ; and were the open column offered as an eligible substitute, partaking of all the defects of the close formation, it would display none of its advantages, since, under a greater play of the enemy's artillery, it would offer but the unconnected succession of partial and feeble attacks. The day of Austerlitz was chiefly decided by a column that, in a slow pace moved to the height of Pratzen, which the Russians had neglected to occupy, and which, once in possession of the French, divided the allied armies. That Buonaparte favoured the order of depth, the relation of his battles will hardly permit us to doubt ; the successful application he made of it to his reserve, is perhaps the most striking feature of his tactics ; numberless are the instances recorded in the annals of the late war, where the efficacy of the masses have been conspicuous, but whenever the close position is resorted to, it is never to abandon its proper character of march ; like a torrent which carries along all that obstruct its passage, it must firmly pursue its course, reach its destination, and there, with irresistible force, overwhelm every resistance it may encounter ; indecision, whatever may be the impending or existing danger, would lead here to certain destruction : you are dreaded only because you appear invincible, if you betray

fear, you are lost ; it is the velocity which gives power to the stream, as it declines in its rapidity it loses its strength, and if it ceases to run, the waters stagnate, and eventually dry up.

Besides the immediate object of attack, the close column is also adapted to another purpose of considerable importance, that of facilitating the formation of the line, in which, in addition to the ease and speediness of execution it provides for ; the troops, by standing thus compact, are apt to deceive the enemy as to their strength, as well as to keep him in suspense as to the ultimate position they are going to adopt ; and while it thus promotes the movement itself, it enables the commandant, by the men being so brought together in a body, to overlook more readily the performance. Should this manœuvre, to which the name of deployment has been given, take place under its most favourable complexion, the column ought previously to have been formed into a column of grand divisions, as well as during the advance, if open, to have been closed to the front, and those objects to have been all completed, before the head reaches the alignment it is designed to occupy.

When the general column consists of three battalions, in resuming the line, it performs like a single corps,<sup>4</sup> but when that number is exceeded, the battalions must first deploy in mass, that is to say, in a contiguous line of close columns, leaving

<sup>4</sup> Detail of the line movements, by Major Palmer: Obs. on § 181, Close column of the line.



being put in motion, move up till they approach each within a pace, or rather two, of that immediately preceding, and the progress of which has been just stopped before ; when thus closed, they are, at the word of their platoon leaders, *halt-dress*, arrested, and fixed in their respective new situations.

*Second*, When the movement is in the contrary direction and to the rear (*fig. 149*) the column is likewise halted, and all the divisions, except the last, which preserves its position, are faced about, and thus the third rank in front marched until each reaches within two paces (60 inches) of that before it, when, as it in turn so closes up, it is halted, fronted, and dressed by its own platoon leader.

*Lastly*, Were a central company selected to operate upon, the execution partakes of both the former evolutions ; it will, consequently, require from the divisions in rear, a performance similar to that explained where it takes place to the front ; and from those in front like that where it takes place to the rear : the former will, accordingly, advance into their desired situations, while the latter, after facing about, will step to the rear, to gain their approached positions (*fig. 150*).

It is obvious that the rear, as well as the central performance, requires a cessation of march in the division of formation, but this is not immediately essential, when it takes place to the front, as the head of the column may be permitted to move in

the slow pace while the rear is closing up in the quick or quickest cadence.

Thus concluding what relates to the first movement, we will take a view of the second, by which, from close column, the natural distance betwixt the divisions is resumed; to accomplish this, the body, after it is first halted, receives the caution, *to form an open column from the rear*, at which the head division is instantly ordered by its leader to advance in the ordinary or quick time, and, on gaining its proper distance, is followed by the second; that second, when it has left behind the proper separating space from the third, is, in the like manner, followed by the third; the third, by the fourth; and so on, is every division, at the word *march* of its leader, put in motion, as that in front takes the pace which completes the distance (*fig. 151*); as the division in rear of all receives that injunction, the column may be either allowed to proceed, or receive the appropriate command for a cessation of progress.

Yet, where this is performed on a rear division, the intention may be fulfilled by an evolution somewhat different from that just explained, for while the last division stands fast, the remaining may all be put in motion together, and each (beginning from that in rear of those on the march) be halted successively by the officer of the following platoon, if so performed; for example, in the instance shown (*fig. 152*), the eighth division here in rear of the column preserves its position, while the others step

off in a body. So soon as the seventh has sufficiently advanced to establish the proper space, which is to separate it from the eighth, the platoon officer of that eighth halts it, pronouncing the words *No. 7 halt*, and in the like manner are all the divisions in turn arrested by the officer in rear, as distance is gained. Thus the leader of the seventh halts the sixth platoon; the leader of the sixth, the fifth; and so on, until the movement concludes by the leader of the second, who halts the first division. That latter mode of operating, by obliging the officers to stop each the march of the division in his front, is evidently less favourable than that first described, in which such an interference is avoided.

Were it required to open out the divisions from the head instead of the last division, the column would in the first instance be faced to the right-about, and all the platoons except the original leading one (now in rear by the change of front but which is immediatly fronted again), are in their reversed position of ranks, marched forwards till they reach their proper situations, where they are halted, fronted, and dressed, each by its respective leader, who, in counting the paces, from the instant the division immediately behind him was stopped in its advance and fronted, will judge the time he is to arrest his own<sup>97</sup> (*fig. 153*).

<sup>97</sup> The platoon officer may, by stepping behind his division, readily become acquainted with the number of paces its front contains; a knowledge which afterwards, while manœuvring, will much fa-

*Finally*, Were the movement of a central description, and the column opened on a company neither the leading nor the rear one, those situated behind that of formation would have to face about, and to perform, as where the column opens from the front ; whereas those a-head would have to execute as where the manœuvre is from the rear ; a circumstance their relative position so sufficiently explains, as not to need any further elucidation ; but a strange deviation those movements present, and which perhaps might not be so instantly apprehended is, why in regaining distance, the performance is conducted on so very different a principle, where it occurs on the head, or on the rear of the column ? And why the execution recommended for one could not suit the other case ? Yet this is easily accounted for, from its being the rear rank that leads in the instance of a rear performance, and in the divisions that could therefore neither step off in turn, as that just immediately preceding had acquired

facilitate his keeping of the true distance, from that preceeding ; as by occasionally counting the steps performed till he reaches a certain spot, on which that in front stood, when he thus commenced to tell them, he may, while in motion, ascertain whether he is either too near or not sufficiently approached. In the present instance, he must however remember to give his words *halt—front*, about three or four paces short of the number, he knows his division occupies in the line, a difference which is here made up, by the depth of the division immediately preceding, as well as by the two paces ordered to be left between the same and its own, while in close column. Were the front of his division equal to ten paces, he would deliver his command *halt—front*, at the sixth or seventh pace after that in rear had been faced about and fixed in its position.

its distance, as practised in the first mode, nor, according to the second, be arrested in their march by the officers in their rear ; since in both cases the leaders would no longer provide for their own ground, but attempt to supply for that of the next company, which, although it is during the progress of the evolution moving before, will, after resuming the proper front, be placed in rear.

Those movements, to open and to close distances while in column, do not exhibit variety, where on a larger scale they are performed by a column of the line ; and it is on the same principle, likewise, that all reductions to half, quarter, or any other proportionate distance, are also effected. In those latter cases, the giving of the word *halt*, influenced by the operation designed, must obviously be so timed, as to keep between the succeeding bodies the space wished to be preserved.

Among the French, and troops of the Netherlands,<sup>88</sup> the close column is opened from the rear by the first method : every officer accordingly directs his platoon to step off, when that in front takes the pace, which establishes the distance ; this is also the manner adopted by the Austrians<sup>89</sup> who, however, constantly perform those alterations, effecting the depth of a column either to gain or to close the distances in the accelerated cadence ;

<sup>88</sup> F. R. école de bataillon, 393, 400 ; évolutions de ligne, 212, 216 ; R. I. der N. bataillons school, 405, 411 ; linie evolution, 213, 218.

<sup>89</sup> A. R. §. 2. haup. ii, abs. i, § 4, abs. ii. § 1.

with the exception of this particular, their practice offers not the slightest variety, when, therefore, the column opens from the front, the divisions in rear are faced about, and successively halted and fronted by their officers. The French regiment adds, that when a column of the line resumes distance, attention must be paid to the ordered intervals separating the battalions; and that of the Austrians remarks, in the movement where it takes place from the rear, that as the last division steps off, the column may be either permitted to continue in the quick pace, or by the chief be restricted to the slow cadence, or, again, by him, be stopped in its progress, which observations, though perhaps not immediately specified in orders, obviously apply to all services.

In the Prussian infantry, these manœuvres are also performed on the same principle: when the divisions are directed to approach, in order to convert into the close formation, the platoon officers who are advanced in front of their platoons, quit those stations to remove to the right of their men; for the rest, the operation is perfectly alike to that described. To recover distances the intention is accomplished by the first method; the platoon commander of the head division resumes his advanced position in front of his platoon, gives the word march, and steps off, followed by his men; the platoon officer of the second *zuge* regains also his central advanced situation, and so posted, awaits till the division before it has obtained its true

distance, to deliver the appropriate word *march*, which puts his own platoon in motion, this is successively repeated by the third, fourth, &c. till that in rear is ordered to move forward.

#### CHOICE.

If no particular reason directs to the contrary, the column is at all times to be closed to the front, an evolution both easier and more regular than that where it is attempted, either on the last, or on a central division, particularly in the line in which the repetition of facing about, as well as the march to the rear, must, on so great a depth, tend to create difficulties, and where, if encumbered with artillery, ammunition, &c. the performance becomes truly precarious; the first has, besides, the advantage of allowing the head to remain in motion, and thus to pursue the advance while the column is in the act of closing.<sup>100</sup>

<sup>100</sup> Were a battalion to consist of eight companies, each of 15 files, as the front of the divisions would, in that case, be of 11 paces, the line a b (fig. 148), must be equal to  $7 \times 11 = 77$  paces, from which number, deducting the space occupied by the divisions in front when closed up, and the two paces directed to be left between them, which altogether amounts to about 28 paces, we shall find the remaining ground b c moved over by the last division, to come up and complete the closing of the column, to be  $77 - 28 = 49$  paces, which, if taken in the ordinary time, will be performed in less

The evolution to be preferred in recovering the open from the close column, is evidently the performance from the rear division, by the method

than a minute, and require not half a minute if taken in the quick cadence: from the halt, a column of three battalions of the strength here supposed, therefore, may close to the front in two minutes, without even deviating from the common pace; but were the leading division to continue in motion, and to proceed in the ordinary, while the rear moves up in the quick movement, the progress of the manœuvre will be much slower, and the exceeding difference, which the proportion between the two cadences allows,  $108 - 75 = 33$  be the number of steps only gained per minute, since the 75 here deducted from the 108 will be taken by those in front as well as by those in rear, within that period. To determine, therefore, the time requisite to close up, under the circumstance of advance, it will be necessary to see how often 33, the number of steps secured every minute, is contained in 49, the distance ascertained from b to c (which is the line traced out by the last division for completion), and we shall find, that, under the circumstances of continuance of progress, the open column of a battalion, as here alluded to, cannot be converted into a mass, in less than nearly a minute and a half, and, that if consisting of three battalions, it will demand not much less than five; it is likewise to be remarked that, where so performed in the instance of a single corps, the head, at the termination of the manœuvre, will be advanced  $75 \times 1\frac{1}{2} = 112$  paces to the front of the place where it stood when the closing commenced, and, that if three battalions were thus to operate, 336 paces will be moved forwards before conclusion.

As the principal use and occasion of converting an open into a close column, is to facilitate the deployment, and to act as a preparation to the formation of the line, attention must be paid, while thus assuming the compact position, not to overshoot the designed alignment; for, were this neglected, time would be lost, as



first explained (*fig. 151*) ; but where debarred of this more favourable feature, and where compelled to operate from the front or any central point, the means offered before, however objectionable, must be employed as laid down, for want of better.

well as additional fatigue incurred, from the unnecessary advance, while, by unguardedly drawing too near the enemy, it would, most probably, commit the safety of the column, and much perplex its future operations.

113.

## CHAPTER VII.

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### OF THE CLOSE COLUMN.<sup>1</sup>

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We have already fully related in the preceding, the discordance of sentiments which prevailed respecting the formation of the foot, and in conclusion to the controversy which it occasioned, adduced the conciliatory principle by which it terminated, in admitting the line as the primitive mode of arraying the infantry, with the proviso of reverting to the deep order whenever a more powerful effect on a certain point rendered the compact position preferable. In those cases it is the close column which, in modern tacticks, represents and replaces that order of ancient warfare, and not unfrequent are the occasions for its employment, since the attack of a village, the forcing of a retrenchment, a sortie, the hostile passage over a bridge or through a defile, the carrying even of a decisive post in battle, and the last exertion of a reserve, have all been enumerated, as so many instances

<sup>1</sup> R. and R. part iii. close column; part iv. close column of the line.

which assert its excellence, by calling forth its application. It is, however, to be remarked, that whenever thus used, the mass is not preferable, because its impelling power increases in proportion to the collected aggregate of combatants, and as their number swells; that it is capable of a stronger effort, the opinion erroneously maintained by the Chevalier de Folard and his adherents, for the laws of mechanicks meant for compact bodies, cannot apply to a union of individuals, that, though assembled together, keep each his own mind; and who, though in connexion, still act each by himself; but it is resorted to because the reiterated efforts which it provides for, by the near approach of its divisions, and rapid succession of attacks it admits, must at last prove effectual, besides, the sight of such a compact force rapidly striding forwards, the threatening appearance of which, bespeaks both strength and determination, must produce an alarming influence on the minds of their antagonists, and while it thus operates unfavourably on the assailed, it gives confidence to the assailant, who, emboldened by knowing he has his succour at hand, grows intrepid as he conceives his danger less and his success more certain; a feeling particularly congenial to the men in rear, who, under shelter, advance without sharing the danger and difficulty encountered a-head; and finally, it is preferred, because those operations, which particularly demand the order of depth, consist more in an advance than in a protracted contest, and the order of march therefore, and not

that of pure engagement, becomes the disposition the most suitable ; but if these be the advantages appertaining to the attack in close column, that formation is likewise not without its defects, as the men, from not being kept so much in sight of the officers in it, as in the line, are liable to give way to irregular practices which they would not be guilty of, if they were more within controul, and this licentiousness is not unfrequently carried to such an excess as to throw the whole body into the utmost confusion ; a circumstance particularly to be dreaded and avoided in this close formation, from its displaying a strong inclination to disorder, both where successful, and in the event of failure ; for, were the first effort unfavourable, and a greater resistance than that expected met with in front, and the flanks, are, at the same time, seriously beat by artillery and musketry, as it was the case with the French columns which attempted to climb the height at Albuera, the men will, by a natural impulse for protection, approach each other, and press upon the centre, till finding themselves disappointed in this, they will, by a contrary motion, diverge, and seek in a flight the safety they vainly endeavoured to procure by a closer union ; yet this very tendency to degenerate into a crowd, is not less to be feared if victorious, than if resisted ; for, however short the decisive moment of collision may be, which properly constitutes the action, while it lasts it must create tumult and lead to disorder, and unless the most unremitting attention be paid to preserve regularity, and keep up the original for-

mation, the men will talk, lock-up, and mix the ranks, and so prodigious will often be the pressure, that it will sometimes cause the flanks to split asunder and burst; that this is confirmed by repeated experience, must be admitted: General Feuquieres relates, that in the Battle of Nerwinden, at the attack of the village of that name, where he in person commanded a part of the troops, the position was seven times carried, and seven times relinquished, merely, says he, because the successful columns were in so disorderly a state as not to be capable of taking post, and of manœuvring according to circumstances, and much less able to resist any feeble attack;\* to obviate these evils, or,

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<sup>3</sup> Besides the regular succession, Guibert (*Défense du système de guerre*, vol. i. part ii. chap. iii.) seems to wish, that each flank should be marked by an officer, or non-commissioned officer, and that some of them should be placed in front as well as in rear of every division; to obviate still farther the intermixture of ranks, he proposes also, that the distances betwixt the following bodies be increased to three paces; these expedients are all introduced in the French Reglement of 1791, that still in force, and chiefly of his compilation.

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<sup>4</sup> Detail of the line movements, by Major Palmer: Obs. on, § 181, Close column of the line.



a space between them generally fixed to six paces, if the front had been previously increased to that of grand division ; and of the additional breadth of a platoon, exclusive of those six paces, if the front of division had not yet undergone augmentation, to facilitate it afterwards ; but as a column designed to extend into line, should, notwithstanding the preceding deployment in mass, never exceed from five to seven battalions, the general column of infantry should, in that proportion, divide and separate in time, so that each mass of the number of corps expressed, may close, and march to its respective point on the alignement. This precaution is reasonable, and where time and circumstances favour it, much removes the objections against that mode of operating and recovering the line, as, by reducing the depth of the performing bodies, it relieves from the anxiety, which a protracted evolution leaves on the mind ; while, from being nearer approached, it equally much facilitates the taking up of their appropriate ground. Yet, after all which may be said about those deployments, they will not meet with that frequency of recurrence commonly ascribed to them, and, unless at a considerable distance from the enemy, troops can thus take up the line, by manœuvring all together out of his reach, it is unsafe ; but this subject, nearer related to the formation of the line, however interesting, would here intervene and interrupt the prosecution of our present design, we must, therefore, submit to the propriety of

referring it to its proper place, where, laid open to investigation, it will undergo an ample discussion.<sup>5</sup> In the close column (*fig. 154*), the ranks are, at one foot distance, the divisions at two paces; and in the general column (*fig. 155*), the battalions leave a distance of three paces between them. The platoon commanders stand on the pivot flank, the right if the left be in front, and the left if it be the right which lead; they are covered in the rear rank by their doubling serjeants; supernumeraries are removed to the reverse flank of their respective companies, on which side of the column are, likewise, situated the drummers, the musick, and the pioneers; the colours, with the reserve attached to them, take post on the reverse flank of the central company, that of the two which, by the formation, is brought a-head; the two bearers and the central serjeant are in line with its front rank. In the close column of grand divisions (*fig. 156*) the officers and covering serjeants of the right companies are on the right flank; the officers of those placed on the left stand on the left; while their serjeants are removed in the centre between the two companies, and, consequently, on the right of their own. Supernumeraries, drummers, musick, pioneers, &c. are all in rear of the column, but the colours, and their reserve, remain on the reverse flank, attached to the centre division, which is posted on that side.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> See chap. xi, § 4, and 5.

<sup>6</sup> In some regiments, in the formation of the close column of grand divisions, and, consequently if on a more considerable front,

Should the front of a column consist of three or more divisions, or companies, the platoon chiefs and the doubling serjeants of all those not immediately on the left, preserve their natural posts on the right of their commands, but in the companies placed on the left, the officers are stationed on the left, the outward flank, and their serjeants on the right; supernumeraries, colours, &c. are posted as mentioned for the column of grand divisions (*fig. 157*). The close position, ill suited for the purpose of march, will generally compel the ranks to loosen, by increasing the directed distance of a foot to a pace, whenever the motion is of any continuance.

When battalions are thrown into a general mass, or in contiguous battalion close columns, their immediate chiefs are no longer to deliver the word of commands, which, from the general commanding the whole, are then merely taken up and repeated by the leaders of brigades, and, at their voices, complied with by the corps placed under their charge.<sup>7</sup>

In the French service,<sup>8</sup> the distance between the divisions, when in close column, is three paces,

the colours, instead of being removed to the reverse flank, are brought between the two centre divisions; in that position they are evidently less exposed; but as the centre companies may not form the same grand division, this, as the formation varies in this particular betrays into a necessity for different arrangements.

<sup>7</sup> Detail of the Line Movements, by Major Palmer, close column of the line.

<sup>8</sup> F. R. *école de bataillon*, 80—88, 663—673 and 682.

and six are left between the battalions, when assembled in general column; the serjeants, in marking the ground, on formation, are accordingly enjoined, to place themselves about five paces from the marker in their front, by whom they take post, while those of the rear platoons are only to leave three. The leaders remain advanced in the centre of their commands, and supernumeraries are closed up at one pace in rear of their companies; if the front be extended to that of division (*fig. 158*); the platoon leader, not the chief of the division, takes post in the centre of the front rank, behind its commander who steps in front. In the centre column, or column of attack, which, by their Reglement, is confined to the single battalion, and formed in rear of the two centre platoons, the successive parts are ordered to leave a space equal to the front of a section, which, as the section in their formation is the half of a platoon, places them at quarter distance; the platoon chiefs are then on each flank, and the *sous officier de remplacement* (covering serjeant) of the left platoon, as in our construction of the grand division, takes post in the centre—drummers are removed to the rear of the column.

What is here related respecting the French, equally applies to the troops of the Netherlands,\* with the additional observation that, when it is designed for the column of attack, to convert into

\* R. I der N. bataillons-school, 80-83, 670-682.

square, the divisions are to situate themselves at platoon or half, instead of section or quarter distance.

The close column of the Danes is, not unlike that of the British ; a considerable difference however it exhibits, consists in the position given to the platoon officers, who, by them, are brought to act on the contrary flank, and on the right when the right leads, and on the left where the left conducts ; as this establishes a difference between the open and close column, amongst which uniformity should be preserved as much as possible, this seems not recommendable ; the Danes have also a column of attack similar to that of the French.

In the Prussian infantry,<sup>10</sup> the openings to be left, betwixt the platoons, are one pace from the front rank of the division in rear, to the supernumerary non-commissioned officers of that in front, who are ordered to draw up, close to the rear rank of their *zugen* ; the platoon officers are invariably on the right, except in the central column, in which those of Nos. 6, 7, and 8, are on the left (*fig. 159*), yet No. 5 remains in the centre, in compliment to the colours, and not improbably for their protection, he is replaced on the left, however, by a supernumerary officer of his platoon. The colours in the close like in the open column, follow the right flank of the fifth *zuge* (platoon) and in a single rank keep in the line of the supernumerary non-commissioned officers.

<sup>10</sup> P. R., Absch iii. kap. vi. § 3.

The Austrian Reglement,<sup>11</sup> as a preliminary remark, observes, that where the column is not intended for immediate formation, to facilitate its motion, the depth should be as nearly as possible brought on an equality with its front, the double of which it should never exceed. In conformity with this principle, the front of half division is, as the most convenient recommended for the battalion, and that below half a company not permitted; while for a regiment, that of division is pointed out as eligible, and that under the front of half division prohibited.<sup>12</sup> Hence a column of *zugen* (platoons) it adds, must invariably, where local circumstances offer no obstacle to it, increase its front before assuming the compact position; the distance allowed betwixt the ranks is that likewise specified to be kept betwixt the fractional parts of the battalion,

<sup>11</sup> A. R. haupt ii. absch. ii. *Von der masse*, § 1.

<sup>12</sup> In reverting to the Austrian formation, we shall find the companies in the German battalions to consist of 54 files, and those on the Hungarian establishment of 61 files; confining ourselves to the first, the proportion of half divisions recommended for the battalion, as it consists of six companies or half divisions, will establish the column at 54 files in front, on 18 ranks in depth, and when under its most reduced proportion of half companies, exhibit 27 files on 36 ranks. As the regiment consists of two battalions of six, and one of four companies, the eligible proportion, that of divisions, mentioned in their instructions for a mass of the same, will constitute it to be of 108 files, on 24 ranks, while its lowest position, will be of 54 in front, on 48 in depth.

Mauvillon fixes at 16 the greatest effect produced by the rear ranks, where that number is exceeded, they can only influence from their offering a greater succession of combatants, ready to replace those who fall in front.

when thus closely removed in each other's rear, but when the front exceeds that of *division* (two companies), and amounts for instance to a battalion, a space equal to the front of a company, (half a division) is mentioned to be preserved between the corps.

In the Russian infantry, when the close column is formed on the right platoon, the right directs, and the platoon leaders are on the right; but when the formation is on the left, or any of the central platoons, the officers are at first on the left; as they are, however, generally removed afterwards to the right again, the latter position seems by their system, to be that more particularly fixed upon for direction, without being however exclusively so as by the Prussians: from what I could understand from their officers, those situations, in the platoon leaders, are in some respect left optional to the commandant, who, to favour particular cases, may displace and direct them to either flank, as he deems proper; when the column faces to the rear, they are naturally, if before on the right, brought on the left by the motion. In the column of grand divisions, as well as central column of attack, they are on each flank, in those cases a serjeant replaces the left officer in the centre; supernumeraries, as with the Prussians, are in rear of their respective platoons; musick as well as drummers are in rear of the column. The colour-bearer, with his reserve, consisting of five serjeants, is removed two or three paces to the right of the right centre platoon.

The distinctive features those various constructions of the close column exhibit, chiefly depending in the dissimilar positions given to the platoon leaders, as they are either brought to the front, or stationed on the pivot or reverse flank of their divisions, as well as in the supernumeraries permitted or not permitted to separate the successive parts; those objects will need some consideration, and previous to the dismissal of the present subject, demand an enquiry to ascertain, where the presence of the platoon leaders and supernumeraries can afford the greatest assistance; though their positions in front, and in rear, as practised by the French, and, so far as relates to the supernumeraries, by the Prussians and Russians, seem well adapted to impede the intermixture of ranks, so strongly urged in the preceding; I cannot forbear thinking, that, where so standing between the men, they must tend to embarrass the motion, and more or less check the action of the body; I therefore certainly give a preference to the manner adopted by the British and the Austrians, in which the leaders and supernumeraries are removed to both flanks,<sup>13</sup> where the latter exceed two or three in number per company, a proportion of them may not unlikely be posted with benefit in the centre of the division, where, dressing in the ranks, they will without incurring the adduced

<sup>13</sup> Some commanding officers are very careless, in not seeing the officers and serjeants take properly post on the reverse flank of the close column which considerably destroys the intention of lining it by them on each side; this particular, is with great propriety, well attended to by the Austrians.



objections, answer the purpose of preservation of order and of preventing the intermixture of divisions, as well, and not unlikely better than when moved to the front and to the rear.<sup>14</sup>

As to the increased distance of three paces, which the French leave between their divisions, it tends also to weaken the mass; a middle course between the two extremes would here, as it does generally, better suit; were a single pace therefore, by drawing the bodies too near, rejected, and by closing them altogether on the least check experienced a-head, viewed as dangerous, two paces would here, not unlikely, become the happy medium.<sup>15</sup>

## SECTION II.

### *Formation of the close Column,*<sup>16</sup>

The formation of the close column may take place from the line, as well as from the open column; from the latter its use is commonly confined to the purpose

<sup>14</sup> Were the company to consist of a grand division, instead of a platoon, where the front of the column amounts to that which would then be denominated a company, the central situation, betwixt the two platoons, would appear well suited for the captain; the first lieutenants would of course be removed, one to each flank, covered by a serjeant in the second, and by an officer in the third rank, the centre file behind the captain might likewise be filled up by officers or non-commissioned officers.

<sup>15</sup> This improvement has taken place by the E. E. and E. part iii. § 77, No. 1.

<sup>16</sup> R. and R. part iii. § 137, 138, part iv. § 190.

of facilitating the deployment ; but its application is not so immediately restrained when from the line, as equally employed to effect a passage over a bridge, as well as through a defile, it is sometimes referred to to favour an attack, sometimes an alteration in the position, or an exchange between two lines.

The manner in which an open column gains the approached position, from being already detailed in the preceding, will leave no room for further explanation.

From the line, the close column is assumed by a peculiar movement, in which the fractional parts intended to break by, are all, except that of formation, which stands still, either faced towards or from the latter, and in file marched in its front, or in its rear, so as to preserve in column the regular succession, in which they stood when extended. Now as this does not lay any restriction as to the particular portion of the line the construction is to take place upon, and a flank or any central part may be thus nominated, and when so selected, the right as well as left be brought a-head, when either the column faces as the line did before, or to the contrary way and former rear, the performance on every fractional part, becomes liable to the variety of four dissimilar operations, and in the instance of a battalion thrown into a mass of companies, where it consists of eight of thirty two, and where it consists of ten of forty different cases, which however are all easily reducible to the four principle distinctive

features they admit, namely : where the column faces as the line ; that 1st, the right flank lead ; 2nd, the left ; and where it faces to the contrary way, and former rear ; 3d, that the right flank lead ; or 4th, the left conduct ;

When the column faces as the line :

*First*, The caution is delivered<sup>17</sup> and followed by the direction for the regulating division to stand fast, and for the others to face to the right, or to the left, and always inwards ;<sup>18</sup> in complying with this direction, the latter disengage their three head files to the front, or to the rear, according as their lines of march point out, and as their positions in column are before or behind that formed upon ; in facing, officers and serjeants change their flank to head their files, if the motion be to the left.

*Second*, When, by the evolution, the right is brought a-head, as the left becomes the pivot flank of the column, the platoon officer of the division of formation, and his covering serjeant, at the command, which directs the facing, face about to shift their positions, to take post on the new regulating side. When the left is brought a-head, this is not necessary, as they are already on the right, the proper pivot flank.

<sup>17</sup> *The battalion will form a close column on (naming the division or number) right (or left) in front.*

<sup>18</sup> When the formation is on the right division, &c. the command is *right division stand fast, remaining divisions right—face*, if on the left, *left division stand fast, remaining divisions left—face*, and if on a central part (naming the division), *stand fast remaining divisions inwards—face*.

*Third,* As it is by the officer of formation and his doubling serjeant, that the remaining platoon leaders are to judge of their line of dress, as they successively come up; his covering serjeant at the word to face, if a flank division be acted upon, takes post according as the evolution is to the front or to the rear, six or eight paces before or behind his officer (*fig. 164, 165*),<sup>19</sup> and thus establishes, with him, the base of a perpendicular line, which the other platoon leaders prolong, under the correction of the battalion chief, who, to be more exact in fulfilling this duty, takes his station to the front; but were the movement enjoined on a central division, as the serjeant cannot assume that removed position, without interfering with the companies, which are to be situated in his immediate front, or rear, he simply covers his officer in the third rank, and by that means, though not so distinctly, points out the same line to be taken up by the platoon leaders (*fig. 166, 167*).

*Fourth,* As those preparatory arrangements are completed at the command *quick-march*, of the chief, the divisions headed by their respective officers<sup>20</sup> who lead the front, while their serjeants step before the rear rank, file into their situations,

<sup>19</sup> Thus the covering serjeant takes post, six or eight paces to the front of his platoon commander, whom he faces when the column is formed to the rear (*fig. 164*), but were the column to the front, he would assume the same position to the rear of his officer (*fig. 165*).

<sup>20</sup> Officers shift their flank when the facing is to the left, to lead their files, but this is not necessary when the motion is to the right as, by the very change of front, they are then naturally brought a-head.

where they are fixed by their own private leaders, who deliver the words *halt—front dress*, to that effect, and who, after seeing those injunctions fulfilled, replace their serjeants.

*Fifth*, It is to be observed, that when the position is entered by the reverse flank, the officer conducts his men until he himself reaches his ground, when, stopping his progress, he halts and situates them; but where the column is approached by the pivot side, as he is the first to gain the same, he stops and allows his division to proceed, until the last file, in passing by, apprizes him of the period to arrest its march and to front his men.

*Sixth*, Since the platoon leaders, in the placing of their own divisions, are to be entirely guided by that the nearest to them, towards the one selected for formation, where the formation is to the front, and they consequently move to the rear, the division they are to be regulated by is that immediately before them; but where they are brought to the front of that acted upon, they are to be directed by that in their immediate rear. The space, in either case, to be left by the serjeant who takes up the distance from the platoon leader posted before or behind him, is three paces and a half, if in three ranks, and about three paces, where reduced to two.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> This is easily computed, by reckoning one foot for the place occupied by the man of the second rank, and one for the man of the third rank, and, adding to this two feet for the distances left between the first and second, and the second and third ranks, and

*Seventh*, On uttering the command *quick-march*, the chief is to take post to the front, so as in person to superintend the perpendicular covering of the officers, and see whether they are exact in gaining their positions ; in this, like in all instances of dress, the fault of moving without the line, is more reprehensible than that of remaining within. As the formation is here successive, officers must be cautioned against unnecessary hurry, as well as unnecessary delay, so that, neither too soon nor too late, they take post at their appropriate period.

When the column is to face to the contrary way and former rear of the line :

*Eighth*, When the column is to face to the contrary way and to the rear of the line, the caution<sup>22</sup> is followed by the direction delivered by its own platoon leader to the regulating division, to face and countermarch to the right ; this places back on the very ground it previously occupied, but fronting to the contrary way it did before,<sup>23</sup> there it remains immoveable during the remaining part of the operation.

again, 60 inches for the distance directed to separate the divisions ; now, as four feet = 48 inches, gives one pace 18 inches, it establishes the ground to be kept between the two officers, at three paces, 18 inches. Were a battalion only on two ranks, it would not be altogether three paces.

<sup>22</sup> *The battalion will form a close column,* on (naming the division or number) *facing to the rear. right (or left) in front.*

<sup>23</sup> (Naming the division or number) *Right-face, right—countermarch, quick-march, and half—front dress.*

*Ninth*, So soon as that acted upon, is fixed in its new position, the other divisions are faced outwards,<sup>24</sup> and in doing so, disengage their three head files to either hand, to front their lines of march ; the platoon leaders and their serjeants, change also their flank to lead the divisions, if the facing has been to the left.

*Tenth*, When by the performance, the right is moved in front of the column, at the command, by which the other divisions face outwards, the platoon leader of that regulating, removes to the left, the pivot flank, and his serjeant, if it be a flank platoon, takes his advanced, or rear position, at six or eight paces, or covers his officer, if a central part directs the operation.

*Eleventh*, Every thing thus forwarded, the battalion chief pronounces the word *quick-march*, at which the divisions that have faced outwards, counter-march, and, headed by their officers and serjeants, step into the column position, into which, as they either arrive by the pivot or reverse flank, they are situated in the manner before described.

*Twelfth*, In the formation of the close column, the colours more a-head of that central division with which they take post, if by the general mo-

<sup>24</sup> *Stand fast remaining divisions, &c. left-face*, if the formation be on the right flank, *right-face* if on the left, and *outwards-face* if a central part be acted upon : the counter-march is either to the right or left, according to the wing which is brought a-head by the evolution.

tion they arrive by the pivot flank, but when the position is entered by the reverse flank, they are, invariably to follow the same on the march.

On the principle illustrated for the close, may a column at open, at half, or any proportionate distance, be formed; when still within 30 paces of their positions, the serjeants of the companies run out to mark the ground.<sup>55</sup> No variety in the execution likewise results, when the evolution, instead of by platoons, is extended to the front of grand divisions or upwards, as the two or more companies, directed to constitute together a fractional part of the column, would have to perform as the single company did before, they would, on arrival, accordingly be halted, fronted, and dressed, by the pivot officer of the whole, whether he be the junior or the senior, and on completion, the platoon leaders of the left companies would have to take their stations on the left flank, as well as every individual to repair to the position the description of column constructed, would point out as appropriate<sup>56</sup> (*fig. 156, 157*).

<sup>55</sup> Though the serjeants are not to run out in the formation of the close column, they are, by the F. E. and E. part iii § 77, No. 1. § 104, a few steps previous to arrival, permitted to take post on the spot intended to be occupied by their officers, this, while it facilitates the evolution, particularly where the entry is by the reverse flank, and the dressing is to the rear, renders the general formation into column more uniform, and is therefore much preferable.

<sup>56</sup> To illustrate this movement still further, we shall here introduce two instances of a central formation, which, from their compound operation, and double performance to the right and left, will tend fully to unfold the mechanism of this manœuvre; *the batta-*



When three battalions are thus thrown into a close column, they may, on a particular division, ope-

*lion will form: a close column on the right centre, company right, in front; right centre company stand fast, remaining divisions inwards—face; as the divisions on the left now face to the right, their officers and serjeants face like the rest, but as those on the right face to the left, their officers and covering-serjeants face about to shift their flank, ready to lead their men (the officer the front, and serjeant the rear rank), the three head files of all the divisions which have faced, disengage to the right (fig. 166); as by the movement the right is brought a-head, and the left, therefore, becomes the pivot of the column, the officer of the regulating division, as well as his serjeant, changes also his flank from the right to the left; the chief rides to the front to take his object of correction.*

At the word *quick-march*, all, except the right centre company, step off, and as No. 1, 2, 3, arrive by the reverse flank, their officers lead them till they gain their ground, when they give the words *halt—front dress*, and place their divisions, but, as No. 5, 6, 7, 8, reach their positions by the pivot side, the officers stop as they come at the same, and permitting their divisions to proceed as the last files pass by, they pronounce the words *halt—front dress*, for their divisions, and finally, *eyes—front*.

The second example we shall now produce, is, a formation on the same centre company; but facing to the rear, on the delivery of the caution, therefore, *battalion form close column, on the right centre company right in front* (or left in front if desired), *facing to the rear*, the platoon leader of that so named, says, *division or right centre division right—face, right—counter-march, quick-march*, and when it has taken up its own ground, facing to the former rear, *halt—front dress, eyes—front*, the battalion chief then orders *outwards—face* (or right or left face, if on a flank), the officers and serjeants of the divisions on the left, shift their flank to lead their men, and, as the right is brought a-head, the leader of the directing platoon, and his coverer, move to the left, the pivot side;

rate as a single corps, and the additional distances of three paces between them, if so, are to be merely attended to, but where that number is exceeded, they are, first by battalions brought into separate close columns,<sup>27</sup> and, when thus in a line of contiguous masses, faced, and by their flank moved in front, or in rear of the directing corps, which, appointed for formation, stands still, while the others take post before and behind it, in the general column; the manner in which this is performed, may be seen in *fig. 170*, where it will be observed, that the active battalions face inwards towards that regulating, and move on till they arrive at a few paces from it; when turning on the march, or halting and changing front, they proceed to the

thus ready, the battalion commander delivers the words *right counter-march, quick-march*, when they all proceed to their column situations, where they, by their platoon leaders, are fixed on the commands *halt—front dress, eyes-front*; had the left been brought a-head, the battalion chief would have given the words *left counter-march, quick-march*.

<sup>27</sup> Line movements by Major Palmer on section 190, and observations on 65th movement: the tactics of the British army reduced to detail, by Major James Cuninghame, movement: 1, 2, and 3. Those treatises designed for the elucidation of the 18 movements selected for a review, are seldom entitled to any praise, the work of Major Cuninghame, by presenting it for a brigade, is, however, more interesting, as it speaks of a subject commonly less understood; the author, besides, does not confine himself to the mere description of the evolutions, and their word of commands, but occasionally illustrates them by their applications on service; the general explanations by which it concludes, and which treat on warfare

front or to the rear, according as their new situations in the general column, are before or behind that operated upon, they thus continue to step till opposite their ground; where turning again on the march, or halting and facing, they, by the flank march, step into their positions, which might, on the pivot side, have been previously marked by their adjutants.

Were the number of battalions considerable, and deemed expedient instead of one, to place them in several columns, the battalions, after they have been thrown into separate masses, will be divided and distributed to their respective columns, and amongst them, one in each be appointed for formation, the performance on that so nominated, will then be accomplished as explained, and merely offer a multiplied, though perfectly similar evolution to that previously described, where all the corps are brought into a general mass (*fig. 170*).

By the mode of execution just detailed,<sup>28</sup> the regular order and regular succession of the several

In general, happily distinguishes it, likewise, from the numberless productions of the kind.

<sup>28</sup> The great resemblance this evolution presents to the doubling or folding up of parts, has induced Count Guibert to distinguish it by the appellation of *ployer*, to fold up; but this denomination, not sanctioned by usage, has not been incorporated into our military vocabulary; although the word to deploy, *deployer*, used for the opposite movement, has been received; were the words *to fold (into close column)* and *to unfold (into masses or into line)*, admitted and substituted to those of *ployer* and *to deploy*, they would express those movements without having recourse to foreign expressions.

divisions is not disturbed, and, while this is provided for, the facility it exhibits on performance is still enhanced by the variety of cases it is prepared to meet, in allowing the mass, faced on either side, to be presented on any desired spot and part of the line; endowed with those qualifications, it becomes, apparently difficult to discover the blemish which may still leave room for censure, yet, censured it was by some, who, deceived by false appearances, viewed it as an evolution by far inferior to that where the formation is restricted behind the central division, a mode of operating they considered as infinitely shorter and safer, from the recovery of the line, that then takes place in rear, and under the protection of the front division; but how much those pretended advantages, are merely delusions, will readily occur, when the two movements are fairly investigated, and, when on taking a view of *fig. 166* and *169*, in which the formation on the right centre company, under the two modes, are represented, it will, besides the very striking defect that *fig. 169* naturally displays, from the intermixture of the fractional parts, every one thrown out of its proper place, appear, that the recommended movement is evidently the slower, as all the divisions, from being brought to the rear, will compel the first and eighth companies, for instance, to step over more ground to gain their new positions, than any of those in *fig. 166*; and since, in the recovery of the line, the rear division has in both, the same line of march to

trace out, no difference can possibly exist between them as to time, since both movements must be completed within the same period; and lastly, in reverting to the safety urged as obtained from it when deploying, as it consists here in the divisions, which, while manœuvring, are covered by that in front, it is so flimsy an argument, and a vagary so merely speculative, that it is hardly entitled to a reply. The formation of the line, seldom attempted under the heavy fire of artillery, will, certainly, much less so be ventured under the range of musketry,<sup>29</sup> besides, as that right centre company could fire but once, the protection it would afford will be so trifling, and so little adequate to answer the perilous situation of deploying, in the proximity here supposed, that some difficulty arises to ascertain whether the assertion is meant in earnest or not, and whether the boldness of the platoon, which is alone to withstand the attack of the line, or the boldness of the officer who ventures to adduce such a position in behalf of his theory, is more to be admired. Were a column, so formed, in rear of the centre, on the march compelled to diminish its front, the utmost confusion must inevitably take place, yet, if thus defective for a battalion, its application to the general column of the line, will still be less satisfactory, since, without alluding

<sup>29</sup> This column was proposed by Mr. De Menil Durand in his *Système François*; it is ably confuted by Count Guilbert in his *Defense du système de guerre*, vol. i. part i. chap. v. 9th manœuvre observations.

to the defects enumerated in resuming the extended position, the additional inconvenience for every battalion, except that ahead, of being obliged in mass, to move to the centre of its ground, in order to place the front division in its proper central situation, and spot of occupation before deploying, will be manifest; the evolution, it is true, will not by this be protracted, but an increased fatigue for the men posted in the inward wing, who would be compelled to step first to the centre, and then be obliged to return from whence they came, for ultimate formation must be the immediate result from it, while additional exposure would be derived from the battalions which in close columns are made to march over half their ground; a construction which demands so faulty a contrivance, must itself be obviously defective, and little calculated to replace a manœuvre, which, divested of those inconveniences, offers none that can reasonably provoke objection.

But from hence it must not be inferred that the centre column is altogether inadmissible in tactics, for, as Count Guibert remarks, there are instances, if restrained to a single battalion, where it is particularly appropriated; those cases that celebrated writer reduces to two, for the column of attack, and where the passage over a bridge, or the interchange of lines, momentarily requires the collected formation, with a certainty of arrival to the new ground by the centre of the position, and it admits consequently the possibility of restoring

the line, by the contrary movement to that employed to convert into mass;<sup>30</sup> the formation, however, then resorted to, widely differs from that before proposed, since, as it takes place on the two central divisions, and the right wing is brought in rear of the right centre company, and the left wing in rear of the left, inversion is avoided, and the benefit of concealing the operation, and reducing it within a shorter compass, is not purchased at the dear price of interference with the primitive arrangement of the battalion; in fact, it may not improperly be viewed as two columns standing a-breast, in which the succession is kept up, and in which the right wing is formed with the left in front, and the left wing brought into a column with the right a-head; no danger, therefore, can be apprehended, provided a central reforming of the line be afterwards practicable. It must, however, be recollected that this, meant for a single, has no reference to several corps, which, if directed to be placed into a double column, are again to revert to the common rule. Were two battalions, for instance, to execute in this manner, the right battalion would form a close column in rear of the left, and the left battalion a close column in the rear of the right division, and thus, by a regular manœuvre, fulfil the intention of presenting the coupled position (*fig. 163*), without destroying the original disposition.

Having thus concluded what relates to the different

<sup>30</sup> It is the present Prussian Reglement, which has truly developed the advantages and the use of the central battalion masses.

species of columns, and elucidated what refers to the British, we shall now proceed to the French, whose performance, besides the difference adverted to on construction, like the three paces to be left betwixt the divisions, the position of the leaders in front instead of on the flank, &c. offers no material dissimilitude for the battalion column,<sup>21</sup> but it presents some novelty as to the line, in which, when converting into a general column, the preparatory formation, in contiguous masses, gives way to the more rapid contrivance of immediate construction. The regulating corps, therefore, acts on the principle of the single battalion, the others are faced inwards, and every platoon in them disengaging its three head files, removes at once, by the shortest way, to its relative situation; but, however, they all contrive, while on the march, to convert into battalion close columns; accordingly in stepping off, the leading division, that in each corps the nearest to the point of formation, reduces its pace to a foot, until the remaining of the same battalion have gained their positions a-breast of it; when recovering the ordinary length of two feet, they all in mass pursue their course, when at about 12 or 15 paces from their column position, the inward division, the nearest to those already posted, leaves again the mass behind, to enter perpendicularly on its ground, while the others, in gaining speedily the parallel

<sup>21</sup> F. R. *école de bataillon* 71—111, *evolutions de ligne* 35—63; and for the troops of the Netherlands, which perform in the like manner, *bataillons school*, 71; 111. *Linie evolution*, 35—63.



situation with it, take up theirs in a rapid succession (*fig. 171*) ; the divisions, as it is customary with us, are halted by their officers who stand on the pivot flank ; the battalion chiefs are particularly enjoined to watch the preservation of order and regularity on the march, while the attention of the adjutant major is more directed to the distance of three paces, ordered to separate the divisions, and that of six established betwixt the corps.

In the Prussian Reglement, the construction of the close column from line is chiefly reduced to a rear performance, on either the right or left flank division,<sup>22</sup> the platoon officer, who halts his men, is enjoined to do this, if the right be in front, the instant he sees that his right flank man covers on that flank ; and if the left lead, when the left flank man, likewise, comes up and gains the perpendicular position ; officers invariably take post on the right of their platoons. In the central column, or,

<sup>22</sup> P. R. abbs. iii. kap. vi. § 3 b. § 4, notwithstanding this suggestion to confine the formation of the close column to the rear of a flank division, I was present at the exercise of a Prussian battalion, where it was executed on the right centre platoon ; the officers, as it is customary with the British, headed their men while on the march in file ; those of the right wing accordingly changed their flank to lead, and on gaining the column position, halted in their own persons to allow their men to proceed, on the last file, clearing them, they halted and fronted their *zugen* (platoons) and took post on the right ; those of the left wing, as they came up by the left, continued to head their files, until they gained their positions, when they fronted their platoons, and took, likewise, post on the right.

as they call it *angriffs-colonne*, which, similarly to that of the French, is formed upon the fourth and fifth platoons, the divisions approach, as explained for the close construction, the leaders of No. 1, 2, and 3, behave as where the execution is in rear of the left flank division, and take post on the right, while those of 6, 7, and 8, who allow their files to pass by, take post on the left; supernumeraries remain close behind their own *zugen*, except one officer of the fifth platoon, who takes his station on the right, to substitute his leader, who, in the centre, remains on the left of the same, next to the colours. The musicians move betwixt the second and third, and the sixth and seventh platoons (*fig. 159*). This central mass is applied to the various purposes of attack and retreat, against cavalry, to facilitate the changes of position and passage of lines, and is, likewise, prepared for immediate conversion into square. It may be formed from a column as well as from the line, when from the former (*fig. 161*) the three head *zugen* (No. 1, 2, 3) face to the right, and move round to form successively by files, in rear of the fourth, while the four *zugen* in rear advance obliquely to the left, to complete the double position. The formation of the mass, their *Reglement* adds, from line as well as column, admits of an execution both while halted and while on the march.

In the Russian infantry, the construction of the close column presents no difference from what has been said before, the Russians have a column of

attack, which is, likewise, completed, in rear of the two central divisions; a peculiar mode of execution they practise, and which deserves, however, to be noticed, consists in the divisions that, preparatory to formation, successively halt at four paces from each other, so that the whole take up an echelon position, in which the flank designed to lead, is the most advanced, and that intended to close the column stands to the rear of all (*fig. 172*). Thus situated, the division to be acted upon stands still, while the others are faced and filed in its front or rear. *Fig. 173* represents this as occurring on the right centre platoon, in order to pass a defile, and *fig. 174* exhibits the same evolution, in which the divisions in rear have only been permitted to take up the successive position, whilst those a-head of that of formation are restrained to the regular execution; of those two movements the latter is infinitely the better, as it confines the manner to its more favourable application, for if, by it, time be gained, and ground be spared in the divisions to the rear, that are reduced to the parallel instead of the oblique entry, it operates very differently on those to be placed in front, which it compels to step along the two sides of the triangle instead of the hypotenuse; the eligibility of this method in the formation of the central column of attack, provided immediate advance be intended, is easily discernible. It is further to be remarked that, when the successive parts of the battalion thus halt in turn, the platoon officers at the caution, by

which it is signified, if not already on the inward flank, must change to proceed thither; a direction accounted for, in the more favourable situation it places them, to stop the progress of their men in time.

When from the column of platoons, the Russians convert into the column of attack, the first division (*fig. 162*) faces to the right and moves in file, till it has uncovered those in its rear, when it halts and fronts. In the mean time, the column continues to step forwards, and the second, after passing beyond the first, faces and files in its front, and takes post before it, the third places itself in the like manner before the second, and the fourth before the third; the rear divisions then move up a-breast, which closes the evolution. Were a column of platoons now to be resumed, No. 5, 6, 7, and 8, stand fast, whilst 4 steps forwards till it clears 5, when it faces and files in its front; 3 takes its position in the like manner before 4; and this is successively repeated by 2 and 1; which latter, in assuming its station in front of all by completing the intention, concludes the manœuvre.

#### CHOICE.

We have already noticed the formation of the close from the open column to be preferable: when to the front it is executed by the rear divisions, which move up to the leading one; when executed from the line, the disposition required and future line of march, can merely lead to

determination, however, where there is no particular reason to the contrary, the performance on either of the central companies, or on a central corps of the line, by admitting both a speedier completion and less exertion in the men, presents advantages not repeated whenever any other part is selected to act upon; yet it must be admitted that, where it happens in rear of a flank division, the execution from it is somewhat simplified.

The manner explained as occasionally used by the Russians, where the divisions halt in succession, to take up an echelon position, previously to formation, might, where properly understood, and confined to those divisions, which by the movement are to be brought to the rear of that of direction, meet with its favourable application; it seems peculiarly well adapted to the central column of attack, a construction which, though still of a foreign soil, is too valuable not to claim the benefit of being ingrafted on our system.

It is to be observed, that the front of platoon, subdivision, and section, though generally preferred for the open column, as more congenial to the march, are not so favourable for the close formation, whose two-fold purpose of attack and deployment, seems to point out the grand division as more suitable.

In conclusion it must be remarked, that though our practice, when forming a considerable column from line, is perhaps of a more general application

than the mode used by the French,<sup>33</sup> its eligibility evidently fails whenever there is sufficient room to render the latter practicable, since where no obstacle impedes and thwarts progress, it is by far the shorter as well as the superior movement.

### SECTION III.

#### *March of the close Column.*<sup>34</sup>

The rules which direct the advance of the open column direct the march also under the close formation, yet, as the serjeants in the latter cover their officers, and by standing between them, become a part of the directing line, the rule which enjoins the preservation of the perpendicular dress with the two persons immediately preceding, while on the march, is now extended to the doubling serjeants, as well as to the platoon chiefs; the chief of the leading platoon, therefore, marches on his points; his serjeant marches on him, and one of the points made known to the side serjeant; the chief of the

<sup>33</sup> It will appear by *fig.* 170, that, although the British mode of performance derives no inconvenience from the pond therein represented, the manner of the French would be much obstructed by it. It is true that their *Reglement* provides against objections of the kind by merely expressing that every mass is to gain its ground in the general column by the shortest line, without defining the particular line to be pursued.

<sup>34</sup> R. and R. part iii. close column, § 138, 140. M. and P. attention in commanding officers, in platoon commanders, and in covering serjeants

next platoon on the officer of the first and his doubling non-commissioned officer ; the serjeant of the second on his officer and the serjeant of the first ; the officer of the third on the serjeant and platoon chief of the second, and so on.

This close formation, chiefly designed for the attack, or as a preparative for deploying, will seldom require a considerable advance or retreat. Were, however, a more protracted motion designed to remove the inconvenience attending the march, when so locked up, the command, *loose the ranks* will be given,<sup>35</sup> and be complied with, by the divisions, which, except the leading one, step short until the ranks of those in their front have opened, when successively by ranks they resume the natural length of pace at the words *step out* or *forwards*, delivered by their leaders. Should the word *halt* be heard, while thus in progress, the column complies with the injunction, and the ranks keep their increased distances, for should nearer approach be designed, the leading division will, in a low tone of voice, be apprized to cease its progress, and the others, still moving on as they come up, and gain the close position, be halted in turn, by their leaders.

In the advance of the close column, musick, drummers, and pioneers, remain in rear, or, if convenient, they may be removed to the reverse flank ;

<sup>35</sup> When the command, to *loose the ranks*, is not heard, as the indulgence is not intended, the directed distance of a foot between the ranks, two paces between the divisions, and three paces between the battalions, must be critically observed.

if on the front of companies, supernumeraries and colours follow the motion on the reverse flank, the latter keeping up with the leading central division. Artillery, when attached to the column, may be a-head or on either flank.

Were a column to retire, the general direction to face about, merely precedes the delivery of the word *march*, or *quick-march*.

In the French service, the following instructions are given respecting the advance of a contiguous line of battalions in mass: one of them is nominated for direction; the adjutants step all six paces in front of their corps, each opposite his leading platoon chief,<sup>36</sup> who, placed in the centre of the front rank of his division, is exactly to follow that staff officer; on those two, the leaders of the remaining divisions in rear, direct their steps by keeping up the perpendicular covering under the correction of the battalion chief who is behind the centre of the mass; the adjutants in stepping out, are cautioned to be exact in preserving the straight direction, under the guidance of the battalion chiefs in rear, as well as to maintain the cadence and length of pace, and

<sup>36</sup> F. R. *Evolutions de ligne*, 299, 303. It is to be recollected, that although the platoon leaders are, in every division, removed to the two flanks in the column of attack, that in the regular mass, the division commanders are advanced to the front of the centre of their respective divisions, with the junior platoon leaders behind them in the centre of the front rank (*fig.* 158); those latter officers are now directing the advance of the mass, while the division chiefs who have left their advanced positions have removed to the right of their divisions, their stations when in line. *Ecole de bataillon*, 277, 297.



to perform all this without any reference to each other, or attention to the general line, the care of which, is entirely vested in the adjutant-majors; those latter, in each corps, are, for that purpose, brought to pace on the opposite flank to that of direction, in line with the front rank, and thence to see their battalions keep up. The feeling and dressing are, in every division, towards the centre where the directing platoon leader is posted, the division chiefs are represented as taking up the stations they occupy in line.

In the Prussian *angriffs colonne*, column of attack the colours direct the advance, and take *points de vue*.<sup>37</sup> When the perpendicular march is relinquished, and obliques are taken up, whether the column be open or close or be that of attack, it is, in the Prussian infantry, performed by every individual executing a half face, and proceeding as described for the inclined march;<sup>38</sup> but this is not the case in the Austrian army, in which those alterations from the straight line of march when arising under the mass, are accomplished by a circular motion, in which the flank inclined to is stepping short, while that on the other side, by stepping out, wheels the close column so as to face the new direction; when sufficient ground has thus been gained towards a flank, and the parallel position is again required, it is recovered by the contrary movement.

<sup>37</sup> P. R. absch iii. kap. vii. § 7 and 11.

<sup>38</sup> See chap. ii, § 4; A. R. haupt ii. absch. ii. § 2.

Among the Danes, the leaders of divisions who are stationed on the flank, cover each other on the march, and all of them the leading one, who is provided with objects to direct his progress; supernumeraries and colours follow in rear of the column. In the Russian infantry, the colour, with its attendants, moves on the flank of the right centre platoon; the supernumeraries, like those of the French and Prussians, step in rear of their respective divisions.

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#### SECTION IV.

##### *Flank March of the close Column.*<sup>39</sup>

This movement, whose application to the formation of a general column of the line from contiguous masses, has already been noticed in the preceding, is likewise referred to when deploying, as well as employed for the purpose of taking up a side position.

The principle on which it is conducted, is similar to that explained for the open column, but its execution is infinitely alleviated in the present instance, from the compact position in which the body is situated; the leader of a flank or of the

<sup>39</sup> R. and R. part iii. close column, § 138, 139; M. and P. attention in commanding officers, attention in covering-serjeants, drummers, musick, and pioneers.

second division, is provided with objects to march on, and the remaining platoon chiefs are, while in motion, to dress on him and his neighbouring officer; those two are regulated, in their advance, by the battalion commander.

When the movement is towards the pivot, the platoon officers and their serjeants, in facing with their men, are naturally placed a-head of their files, ready to lead them but where the change of front is towards the reverse flank, at the caution, the platoon officers, as well as their coverers, are to face about, and to step behind their own rear rank in order to change their flank; the supernumeraries, as well as the colours, by a contrary motion are then to remove to the pivot side, where they follow the column while on the march: but this, meant for the front of division, can have no reference to that of grand division, in which, both flanks, already provided with the proper persons to conduct, will render those alterations unnecessary, and facilitate the evolution by enabling every individual to preserve his original position.\*

\* When the musick, drummers, and pioneers, instead of being in rear, are brought on the reverse flank, they must, whenever the march is towards that side, be careful to step out, so as not to impede the progress.

## SECTION V.

*Changes of Position and in the Direction of March of a Close Column.*<sup>41</sup>

The change of position, and of direction in the march of a close column, are operations, the execution of which have but lately been truly unfolded—attempted before, they were rather supplied by the combination of several evolutions than properly performed; thus, for instance, according to the British system, when those changes were required from the halt, it was directed for the head division to be first wheeled, filed, and in short, to be placed as desired, and for the remaining then to face, and by the flank march to regain their stations in its rear; and if practised on the march (for the possibility of such a movement, where gradual and inconsiderable, is admitted in the late Rules and Regulations), it was merely described in the head to step short, so as to allow the body to go smoothly round, on the principle of the moveable wheel, instructions quite inadequate to supply the necessary information, and which, by leaving those evolutions partially explained, could promise but an indifferent performance, thus, from the disorder in which they seldom failed to throw the mass, they were generally avoided, yet, nothing more

<sup>41</sup> R. and R. part iii. § 141, 142.

satisfactory is offered in the French Reglement," in which, directed invariably to recur from the halt, the contrivance consists in placing to *jaleonneurs* (markers), first, to display the new position; and in the column, whatever may be its depth, to be, after facing to the right or left, by the flank march, made to take up its new ground; it was, therefore, merely when the obliques by the half facings were introduced, that, by their successful application on the present occasion, the embarrassment hitherto experienced when wheeling on a number of ranks, disappeared.

It is to the Germans<sup>43</sup> that we are indebted for this improvement in tacticks; but although the mode adverted to is practised both by the Austrians and the Prussians as well as by the Russians;<sup>44</sup> as the Reglement of the first is more explicit and satisfactory on this head, I have preferred to enumerate the rules, as they are there laid down, for

<sup>43</sup> F. R. *école de bataillon*, 244, 261.

<sup>44</sup> It was the Archduke Charles, who, I believe, first introduced it in the Austrian Reglement, which he promulgated in 1807.

<sup>45</sup> In the exercise the first battalion of the Russian regiment of Nerva performed at Maubeuge, in the presence of his Royal Highness the late Duke of Kent, at which I was present, that corps, after being thrown into a mass, was moved with a surprising facility and precision, in a curved direction, which concluded by a wheel, amounting to the three-fourths of the circumference; although this reflected the highest credit on its discipline, as well as on its able commander, Colonel Obroutscheff, it evidently displayed, that the movement, truly understood, must have been conducted on simple and tactical principles.

since the exotick must be naturalized, the best seed should be procured to have it genuine, and of the purest kind.<sup>45</sup>

*First*, The men of the front rank are to circle round on a principle not unlike the moveable wheel, and in their progress to be guided by the number of ranks acted upon, so as to enable the outward wheeling man to shorten his pace, more or less, as the depth bears a stronger or a less proportion to the front of the column. Where those dimensions of the mass present a perfect square, his steps are to be reduced to half the length of pace, and they are to be still shorter, if the number of ranks is more considerable and greater than that of the files. Should the front preponderate in the scale of proportion, the paces of the wheeling man are to be longer, and nearer to the ordinary length; in the latter case he is also, in tracing out his curve, to step somewhat more outwards. This sweep, which is never to be considerable, is, of course, to be much directed by the front of the body performing.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Austrian Reglement, haupt. ii. absch. ii. § 3; Prussian Reglement, absch. iii. kap. vii. § 6; I have not here literally translated the Austrian Reglement, but deduced the rules therein contained, and brought them under the head of six principles; in forming them I have been somewhat assisted also by the Prussian Reglement.

<sup>46</sup> In the Austrian formation, as both flanks are provided, while in the open, as well as in close column, with a line of *chargen* (officers or non-commissioned officers) the movement is invariably directed by the outward flank, to which side the men of the front rank look and dress by. It is the *chargen*, placed on the same, who therefore regulates the curve: this simplifies somewhat the evolution

*Second,* The pivot man is to be regulated, in his advance, by the step taken on the outward wheeling flank; where the change amounts to the quarter of the circle, he is to pace himself over the arch, included within a square of two feet (*fig. 175*), this will much assimilate his line of march to that performed, in the regular wheel, by the rear rank man, who covers the pivot when placed three deep.

*Third,* The whole of the individuals composing the mass, except those of the front rank, make a half face towards the wheeling flank, and in that position by a compound motion, which partakes both of the oblique and the wheel, in gaining more ground to the side than to the front, they follow their file leaders and lengthen their paces sufficiently to keep up the original distance with them.

*Fourth,* This injunction, to guard against opening out, as well as the attention to preserve the covering, is particularly recommended to the individuals posted on both flanks.

but cannot apply to our close column of companies, not so prepared; whenever the alteration is consequently towards the pivot flank, and the officer is posted on the inward side of the wheel, he must be cautious, in stepping over the smaller arch, to trace out his curve, so as not to hurry the outward wheeling man, and enable him to move at the proportionate reduced pace, the relation between the breadth and depth requires. In this he may be assisted, by counting the paces during performance, and in recollecting, that for the quarter of the circle, it will need, where the number of ranks and files are alike or nearly so, the double of the number of steps that there are men in the front rank, still more paces if the number of ranks much exceed that of the files, but less if the column stands on a greater front than depth.

*Fifth*, Whether it be performed in the ordinary or quick cadence, and which will always be that proceeded on before, the tact must be kept up while circling about.

*Sixth*, As a further assistance, the adjutant is directed to mark the ground where the wheeling man is to arrive on completion, and where, at the hearing of the word *forwards*, the straight march is to be resumed.

By the combined movements of the wheel just described, the march to the front, to the rear, and to a flank, a close column may be moved in any direction or placed in any position.

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## SECTION VI.

### *To Increase and to Diminish the Front of a close Column.*

The alteration in the front of a close column is a movement that can hardly be performed but from the halt. When it takes place for the purpose of effecting an increase, the parts in rear, which are to come up, face towards the pivot side, and the officers of the same take a side step, to allow their men to proceed at the word *quick-march*, which is delivered by the battalion chief, and obeyed by those fractional parts which have faced; as they move straight forwards, on clearing the ground of those that remain stationary, they receive from their platoon officers, who have kept



their side positions, the words *halt—front, march*, and on joining those in front to which they are to unite, *halt—dress*, and finally *eyes—front*; when this is effected every individual, according to the description of column adopted, repairs to his station. The evolution, thus far advanced, terminates by the rear divisions, that close up so as to regain the compact position <sup>a</sup> (*fig 176*).

<sup>39</sup> Were a decrease of front, the manœuvre desired (*fig. 178*), the column, from any of its divisions, but more likely from that in rear, must first open out, to augment the space, separating the successive bodies sufficiently to contain the fractional parts, which, in doubling, are to fall back and to be placed between them. Thus prepared, the part or parts to be brought to the rear, and which are always those placed on the pivot side, face inwards, the three head files in each disengage to the rear, and at the word *quick-march* the whole of them step into their retired situations, where they are fixed by their platoon commanders who, in this instance, behave in a similar manner to that explained where such a diminution occurs in the open column, to which the present movement bears every affinity.

<sup>d</sup> Of those movements, the latter will be of an unfrequent occurrence, whilst the former will be

<sup>e</sup> It is an unfavourable, though indispensable, feature of this movement, not to admit of accomplishment during progress; the disorder an advance would here produce, must obstruct the endeavour of its being ever attempted on the march.

principally confined to the purpose of extending the front to facilitate the deployment into line.

Having thus terminated what relates to the augmentation and diminution of front of a close column, as it refers to the British practice, it is probably expected we should likewise produce the modes of performance, adopted by the several European armies; yet so slight are the differences they here present, that curiosity would be but little gratified by the tautological elucidations they would exhibit. We shall therefore merely observe, that, when increasing the front, the French manner,<sup>48</sup> though similar in its process to that described, still differs from it in the right and left hand *guides* (*fig. 179*) of the standing divisions, who, facing both outwards, take post to the front, so as, with their inward arms, to touch the breast of their right and left flank file men, and thus, in every stationary division, determine the line in which the outward *guide* of the platoon to come up is to take post, by covering them, and by fixing himself so, that on formation one of the three outward files of his own section or platoon may close up to him. This, which is consistent with their system, bears the appearance of facilitating the dressing.

The mode of contraction for a column of attack, to pass through a narrow position, is described in the Prussian regulations<sup>49</sup> as follows: the colours and under officers placed between the head platoons move straight forwards, and are followed by the

<sup>48</sup> F. R. *école de bataillon*, 277, 297.

<sup>49</sup> P. R. *absch. iii. kap. vii. § 12.*

rest, which proceed by the flank march. The *zugen* (platoons) accordingly face inwards, and wheel outwards by files ; thus a-breast, in the quick cadence, they move speedily to extricate themselves from the unfavourable ground. As the defile is passed and the head first, and every *zuge* afterwards, clears the narrow pass, the column position is rapidly recovered (*fig. 159*) by the files successively moving up ; the divisions when formed, advance in the ordinary pace to enable those in rear, as they in turn regain the column position, to close up to their appropriate distances.

## SECTION VII.

### *Alterations in the Line of Pivots, and Direction of March while in close Column.*

Although the different purposes to which the open and close columns are directed in their use, must naturally establish a greater, or a less frequency in the performance of certain operations, cast in the same mould, the similarity they offer in construction, by rendering them liable to the same modifications, will still hardly permit an evolution which applies to the one to be entirely overlooked in the other ; thus, for instance, notwithstanding the unfrequent demand which may ever arise for an alteration in the line of pivots, or direction of the line of march of a close column, circumstances so momentous and so frequent in the open construc-

tion, as such operations are still practicable, and might be necessary, they cannot be neglected with propriety; and if so adverted to, they cannot be more favourably presented than blended together, as they were before for the open column: since, without reverting to the analogy it preserves between the two formations, it will be found equally favourable in this as in the former instance, by its including, under one head, the whole of the cases that might be influenced by the direction of march, and position of the enemy.

Hence were a mass to march to the front, and the line of pivots to remain as before, the regular progress in column would answer the purpose.

*Second*, Were the movement to the rear point B (*fig. 180*), the column would in the first instance have to face about, and then have to march with the rear rank in front, or it would perform the counter-march of divisions by files, and after thus fronting to its former rear proceed straight forwards.

*Third*, Should the motion be to the front, while the line of pivots is to be removed to the contrary flank D, the change of wings becomes the operation required.

*Fourth*, Were both the march required to be altered to the rear B and the line of pivots to be changed to the opposite side D, the manœuvre explained before, as practised by the Russians (*fig. 185*), would suit the occasion.

*Counter-march of the close Column.*<sup>50</sup>

This movement, which presents itself the first on examination, is applied to, whenever it is intended to change the front to the former rear, without effecting the original line of formation, which is not altered by it, as the pivots, though removed to the contrary flank, are replaced on the very spots they stood before; thus far the movement under the close column bears every resemblance to its corresponding evolution where performed by a column, in which a greater space is preserved betwixt its divisions; yet a considerable difference will now appear both in its use, and its mode of execution, for, unconnected with the purpose of deploying, and that of attack, the two principal objects of the close column, its application under the latter formation will seldom or ever offer itself, and where requisite, the compact position, in which the successive bodies are placed, will hinder the evolution from taking a like course to that illustrated for the open construction. In the present instance, therefore, the caution, *the column will change its front' by the counter-march of divisions*, will be followed by the direction to face (which will always be to the reverse side) when the officers shift their flank<sup>51</sup>.

<sup>50</sup> R. and R. part iii. § 143; M. P. attention of platoon officers.

<sup>51</sup> It is to be remarked that, whenever the officers or covering

(which they do by moving behind their rear ranks), to be in readiness to lead their files, and are in the positions they just left replaced by their serjeants, a second caution is then delivered, "*even divisons (namely 2, 4, 6, 8, &c.) will lead out*" and after it the command "*quick-march*," meant again for those even companies, which of course step off at it, and keep on the march until they have by three or four paces, cleared those which have not stirred, when they are arrested by the word *halt*, thus situated all the divisions are by the caution *the whole' will counter-march* first apprized, and by the command *quick-march* made to counter-march to the right or to the left, the contrary side to this faced,<sup>22</sup> and by wheeling short round, their front ranks made to proceed to their respective covering serjeants who, as mentioned before, have first stepped into their officers' stations, as they removed to the opposite flank, and there awaited for the delivery of the last word *quick-march*, to face about so as to mark the points the platoon

serjeants, or both of them, had occasion to alter their flank, to lead their files, they used, when in close column, to perform it at the caution; the reason of this was, that as the divisions were at one pace distance, there was not sufficient room left, after the men had changed front to allow the passage; but as two paces are now directed to separate the following parts, the removal of the officers and serjeants may be properly delayed until the hearing of the word *face*, as the execution is shortened, as well as the appearance improved, by the whole acting simultaneously.

<sup>22</sup> It is an unfavourable, but necessary, feature of this movement, not to admit performance during progress.

leaders are to conduct their head files ; on closing upon the same covering serjeants, the officers deliver the command *halt—front*, and *dress*, to their divisions, and take post by replacing their planted coverers, who fall back into the rear rank, when so relieved.<sup>43</sup>

Where the formation is lowered to two deep, there is another method which may, when so posted, be referred to with advantage ; it is performed by the divisions first facing by ranks, the front rank in each towards the reverse, and the rear rank towards the pivot side ; while the officers and their covering-serjeants, not partaking of those facings, the former step back to take post close to the latter, who face about to show each the spot where his own division's intended pivot-man is to arrive and to halt. On the word *quick-march*, which is then given, the men of the front rank step in file, and in following, those of the rear rank successively wheel round as they arrive at the reverse flank, to take up the ground the latter occupied, while those of the rear rank, likewise, in following those of the first, and wheeling by files at the pivot flank, step into the former position of the front rank ; thus, the whole proceeds until every platoon officer sees his front rank file-leader

<sup>43</sup> The commands are here, *the column will counter-march by divisions in files, even divisions right (or left)-face, quick-march, the whole counter-march, quick-march* ; all delivered by the battalion chief and *halt—front, dress* by the platoon leaders.

approach his serjeant, when he gives the words *halt front—dress*, and dresses his division on his serjeant.<sup>54</sup>

In the performance of this movement, the French follow the manner first described,<sup>55</sup> however, the even divisions, in stepping out to disengage, remain on the march, and while in the act of clearing those standing still, the whole receive the necessary injunction to circle about, so that, without suffering the least retardment, they all commence the counter-march so soon as there is room for its execution.

Among the Danes, when the close column is to counter-march, it first opens out to provide for the ground, on which the divisions require to operate, and after it has changed its front, the close position is again recovered; but this, contrary to their common practice so much bent on rapidity, by offering a protracted evolution is evidently less favourable than where the alternate platoons are permitted to advance and gain ground to a flank; but, should the narrowness of the road prevent the lat-

<sup>54</sup> The cautions and commands are here *the battalion will counter-march by divisions and ranks, front rank right (or left), and rear rank, left (or right)—face, quick—march*, by the battalion commander, and *halt—front-dress*, by the platoon chiefs; this manner is sanctioned by the F. E. and E. part ii. § 56. On three ranks this may be executed by the centre one remaining stationary, and the two others counter-marching and performing round it.

<sup>55</sup> *Ecole de bataillon*, No. 262—276.



ter execution, a method infinitely superior to that of the Danes, is the expedient, when thus situated, employed by the troops of the Netherlands, and which, in their Reglement, is described after the mode first given, which is likewise used by them, and, when so, performed after the manner of the French;<sup>56</sup> the evolution, however, here alluded to, is given in the instance of a column, which is compelled to the counter-march of divisions by files, while it stands in a defile, of which it occupies the whole breadth (*fig.* 182); to accomplish this, the right divisions are ordered to face to the reverse, and the left or even divisions, to face to the pivot side of the column, the whole disengage the three head files to clear the guides, who, both the right and the left one in every division, stand fast and face about: thus prepared, the command *march* is heard, and the platoons in file, immediately counter-march round their front ranks, and by wheeling short round their own guides, placed, next to the leading files, proceed to those fixed on the opposite flank, where, on arrival, they are halted, fronted, and dressed by their respective commanders. The leaders of uneven platoons, who, in leading their men, are, by the operation, brought from the pivot to the reverse side, must shift to the directing flank before they

<sup>56</sup> R. I der N. bataillons school; the common mode is explained from No. 272—276, and that particular manner, from 277—287.

situate their divisions; this being effected, the platoon leaders are ordered to resume their central advanced positions in front of their platoons, the posts affixed to them in the Netherlands' service while in close column; the guides also exchange places to regain their proper flank, which, as the divisions have counter-marched, they have lost, by remaining stationary during the manœuvre.

*To change the Head of a close Column.*

To change the head of a close column, by advancing the rear division to the front, is an operation which may be effected under the approached position, by any of the means already adduced for the similar evolution, when required in the open formation; the divisions, in that case, are, however, then, as where it takes place at half, quarter, or any incomplete distance, to face all at once, instead of successively.

As by the first, the second, and the third methods (*fig.* 135, 137, and 138) the full distance will be recovered, and they will, during the process, convert the close into an open column, which objection is not entirely removed by the application of the fourth (*fig.* 139), that explained under number five (*fig.* 140), seems more adapted on the present occasion: it is true, as it will be doubtless alledged, that

in those preceding, if requisite, the compact position may be restored afterwards ; but this, while it partially palliates the imperfect manœuvre, does not entirely remove the inconvenience complained of, particularly when referred to a column of the line.

That the fifth method (*fig. 140*) is not liable to the same exception, a view of *fig. 183*, representing the application of this movement to the close column will soon evince ; but a mode of execution I shall venture additionally to propose, as equally appropriate and well calculated to answer a performance by corps, and which is simple and prepared to meet the additional incumbrance of artillery, ammunition, &c. and to facilitate their motion, is, that in which, on the caution to change the head, the head division (or head division of every battalion, if in a column of the line), at the direction of its platoon chief, faces outwards to the reverse side (*fig. 184*), and in file marches till it has cleared the column, when it is halted and fronted ; thus disengaged in front, the other divisions are ordered to advance in the ordinary or quick cadence, and as the second moves two paces beyond the first, it either turns on the march, or faces to file and take post before it, this, in rotation is repeated by all ; thus, the third moves before the second, the fourth before the third, and so on, till the last which was in rear closes the manœuvre by filing a-head of all. This evolution, which, in a column of the line, admits of a performance by

corps, each within itself, would perhaps, be still alleviated, were the serjeants permitted to run out, and to mark the spots intended for their pivot officers in the new position.

*March of a Column to the Rear, with the Removal of the Line of Pivots to the opposite Side it was before.*

To effect this purpose, no evolution answers so well as that already explained, and used by the Russians (*fig. 185*).<sup>81</sup> After the delivery of the caution, the half platoons on the reverse side, are faced about, and the whole, while thus standing in two columns, fronting in a contrary way, is then put in motion, so that the half divisions, in following each other, remain all within the ground previously occupied by the column, those on the pivot side successively wheeling the half circle as they arrive at the spot where the head stood, and those on the reverse side, likewise tracing out the half of the circumference, as they, in turn, gain the place the rear occupied. On the leading officer reaching the point b, the word *halt* is given, the march ceases, and the half divisions, which have faced about, resume their proper front, to dress on their respective halves towards the directing flank, from which they had separated on the command *march*, and which have now rejoined, by their individually tracing out the half of an elliptick circumference.

<sup>81</sup> See chap. vi. § 11.

From the preceding, we may establish :

*First*, That, by the march in close column, an advance to the front ( *A fig. 180* ) would be accomplished.

*Second*, That to take up a rear position B, the column, must either face about, or perform the counter-march by divisions in files, and execute the latter, if on two ranks, by the second manner, and if on three, either by the method represented in *fig. 181*, or that used by the troops of the Netherlands ( *fig. 182* ).

*Third*, That, if while advancing it is intended to remove the pivots towards D, the evolution, *fig. 183*, or that recommended, *fig. 184*, must be used ; and,

*Finally*, supposing the motion to be to the rear, and line of pivots to be required, to the opposite side to that it was before, D, it is the evolution ( *fig. 185* ) which will apply.

## SECTION VIII.

### *When two Columns exchange Places.*<sup>58</sup>

This movement, chiefly confined to an army, amongst other instances, meets with application, when two lines, while in column, are to exchange places, by taking up each other's ground ; this, when so required, presents the two-fold execution,

<sup>58</sup> R. and R. part iv. § 192.

of the bodies, meant to displace, standing under the close or open formation.

If it be two open columns (*fig. 186*), which are thus to operate, they both face, and by the flank-march, move towards each other; when nearly approached, one column halts and fronts, to allow the other to pass through the intervals left between its divisions; when this is accomplished, that which has fronted, faces again, and both proceed to gain their new situations.

Were the operating columns at close distance (*fig. 187*), the performance but little differs from that explained since the masses act then as the divisions did before; yet some attention will be required while on the march, to gain the chequered position, and so, that the battalions in one column, by facing the intervals left between the corps in the other, may effect the passage without inconvenience.

A third circumstance, properly introduced, which, if not altogether belonging, is so nearly connected, to the present subject as to crave admittance, is, where two columns while on the march, meet at a point where the two different roads they pursue, cross each other; if so (*fig. 188*), the divisions of the leading battalion of either column, immediately close, and in mass rapidly move over the intersecting ground, on clearing which, they are followed in the like manner by the head battalion of the other column; this is alternately repeated by a corps of each column,

until they are all removed to the opposite sides. Every battalion as it leaves behind the ground common to both roads, may, after advancing sufficiently not to hinder the movement of those in its rear, resume open distance, and proceed on the march, as previous to the interruption.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### COLUMN OF ROUTE.<sup>1</sup>

THE third and last species of column is that appropriated to the route march, not dissimilar to that of manœuvre, it differs from it only by a certain ease permitted during the advance, and by the additional distances it allows between the ranks and the files, in order to add to the comfort of the men and alleviate the fatigues unavoidably attending long and toilsome marches; but, if thus less restrained in its execution, it is not altogether unfettered from the bounds of regularity, for such is the excellence of this column, that while it admits facility of motion, no danger is derived from it, as the complete formation is at all times instantaneously recoverable whenever desired. To effect this great purpose, however, very little is required, as it merely wants the pivot-men to cover each

<sup>1</sup> R. and R. part iv. column of route.



other, as well as to preserve the proper distances, and for the men composing the front rank not to relinquish their dress, since, if those objects be attended to, it becomes immaterial how much the individuals of a same rank fly off and extend to avoid any watery spot or bad part of the road, as, by their closing again upon the pivot file and by the rear ranks that lock up, the column may at once return to its original and proper position.

In addition to those precautions, some have suggested that the cadence should also be kept up; but although the assertion is not unreasonable, and less exertion would, in all probability, result from compliance to it, it is a bitter root, which, however salubrious, few will willingly taste, and which, if forced, will, by creating disgust, most likely produce a different effect to that designed. This constrained march is, therefore, recommended, but almost invariably omitted, particularly if the distance pursued be considerable, and every individual is sanctioned, or, at least, allowed to step in the manner and time he deems the most convenient to keep up with the rest; thus, to promote general obedience, and favour general intention, a partial freedom is indulged to the soldier, which, though detrimental to himself, gratifies his wishes, and, perhaps communicates a slight feeling of independance.

To secure the exact preservation of distances, an officer, or, at least a non-commissioned, is invariably to move on the flank of each division, but

when no danger is apprehended, as where at home or in a friendly country, the march is applied to the purpose of changing quarters, or even in the field, where a sufficient distance from the enemy justifies the measure, this charge may be left to the latter: and when the men unfix their bayonets, and colours are furled,<sup>2</sup> the officers may be suffered to assemble in rear of their corps, or, if preferred, in rear of each wing; positions which far from unsuitable, will, on the contrary, be found well adapted by improving the opportunity they give them of overlooking their men and to check their falling back, the great evil to be apprehended

\* Whenever troops pass through a town, the regular column should invariably be taken up, the colours be unfurled, the bayonets fixed, and the men be directed either to carry or support their firelocks, or if, for any length of time, be indulged with the advanced arms. The officers in taking post, should draw their swords (which may be overlooked while on the high roads), with the latter ceremony some commanding officers have of late years taken the liberty to dispense, by remaining themselves undrawn, but this mode of asserting their preeminence is evidently irregular, as none, below those in charge of a brigade, are entitled to that distinction. To assume a character, which is not our own in common life exposes us to ridicule, but it may, in military transactions, from the contempt it excites, be apt to lead to something worse; besides all irregularities are inadmissible as inconsistent with discipline, and yet that the trifling character they exhibit may occasionally soften their introduction, when analyzed and the poison is discovered, they will always appear dangerous in military affairs; indulgences may be granted to light troops, whose peculiar duty gives here considerable latitude, but in the instance of battalions of the line, every neglect in precision is, at least, reprehensible.

while in progress on the road, and as such particularly entitled to regard, and to be guarded against. On the command *halt*, the column, without any further instruction, is, on all occasions, to regain its regular form; the men of the front rank, in every division, are accordingly, on its delivery, instantly to close up to the pivot, and those posted in the rear ranks to approach their file leaders.

Count Guibert strongly recommends, where obstacles are met in front calculated to slacken the advance of the head, that the rear, while not yet influenced by it, moves on as before, as otherwise material loss of time must be sustained, from the check the progress receives throughout, and from the instant the head arrives till the rear leaves behind the impediment; nay, as he rightly observes, the ground gained at first by the rear battalions, were it even to amount to complete closing, will soon be lost again, and the distances recovered in front, when those rear divisions, labouring themselves under the difficulty, will be obliged to step at the reduced pace and the slowest time of march.<sup>3</sup> But these rules, though speculative and true, from being anomalous, will seldom meet with their unmixed

<sup>3</sup> This, which is strongly recommended in his *Essai général de tactique*, has been adopted in the F. R. *école de bataillon*, 177—182: the passage deserves perusal; those who are not acquainted with the French language may with safety consult in this, like in every other case of reference to the latter work, the faithful translation which Col. Macdonald has given of it.

applications ; and even then the modifications, to which they are liable, will still restrain their use. Thence the particular cases, for which they are truly intended, few will discriminate and many mistake ; like the discords in musick, which are the masterpieces of the art, if timely introduced, but which, destroying all harmony where misapplied, are left to the composer, while the professional performer is directed to play the notes as they stand, the leaders of divisions, nay even battalions, should be kept strictly to the rules, and be ordered to preserve the distances, and let it be left to the generals and commanders of brigades to judge, from the existing circumstances at the time, whether it be expedient for the rear to close up, or for the whole to preserve the original formation.

The front of five or six files is that commonly preferred for the route march of small bodies,<sup>4</sup> as calculated to allow for the opening of ranks without creating additional extension in the column ; five files if three, and four if two deep, must, however, be adequate to answer this object, and even where room does not allow so many men to move a-breast, the front of three must be equivalent, and additional attention supply the enhanced difficulty, which the local circumstances of narrowness

<sup>4</sup> The Duke of Wellington directed the infantry to march by threes, not because he considered it the best formation, but because it was the formation the best adapted to the roads in Portugal, extremely narrow, as the order clearly expresses it, chap. v. § 2. note 11.

of ground render then inevitable;<sup>5</sup> officers and non-commissioned officers, when so situated under a reduced front, are never to step between the ranks; supernumeraries are accordingly to be removed to the rear or reverse flank. General Scharnhorst<sup>6</sup> establishes that, to obviate lengthening out in a column of route, the fractional parts should never be under nine files, if the officers are permitted to march before and behind their divisions, and that they should be increased to eighteen, whenever guns are to move between the corps. General Rogniat, in describing the march for his column of 30,000 men, seems to think that the infantry might, without inconvenience, proceed on a front from ten to twelve files,<sup>7</sup> and prefers that formation. He thus confirms the principle of Major Mauvillon,<sup>8</sup> who strongly urges the necessity for the troops on

<sup>5</sup> This is obviously meant for an army or a column of the line, as it little matters for the front of a battalion, or any part of it; since the trifling extension, derived from moving on a reduced front, might be easily remedied, while the little depth of the column enables it to be easily watched.

<sup>6</sup> General Scharnhorst *Handbuch für officiere*, § 91. vol. iii, *tactik der infanterie*.

<sup>7</sup> Rogniat *Considérations sur l'art de la guerre*, chap. x, which treats on marches, a subject in which the French general blends the knowledge of theory with the advantage of experience.

<sup>8</sup> Mauvillon *Essai sur l'influence de la poudre à canon*, chap. iv. "He speaks (says he) from experience," and further observes that the least stop and arrest in the progress a-head, is very detrimental from the extension it immediately occasions; an evil which is much increased, he adds, from the practice the men have immediately to

a route to assume, at once, the narrowest front they will be compelled to in the progress of the day, to avoid the considerable fatigue the soldiers experience, and general confusion which invariably accompanies all alterations that tend to an increase or a diminution of front, for as the French general (Rogniat) speaks of the strategick movements of an army, and alludes to the high roads, he reduces the number of files to ten, or twelve, as suiting the breadth of the generality of bridges, commonly from twenty to twenty four feet, which, on the march, he conceives to be the narrowest parts encountered; he confesses that the alleged number would not answer the bye roads, but these, he adds, should always be avoided, as always producing delay and extension. According to the late Rules and Regulations, the divisions were never to exceed sixteen or eighteen files.

It is customary among the French,<sup>9</sup> so soon as a column is reduced under six files, if in the proximity of the enemy, for the ranks to lock up, and the regular march to be resumed and preserved till the obstacle which called for this diminution is passed, and the front is again increased; this is not injudicious, as calculated to guard against improper extension, but where it frequently recurs,

lay down the instant there is a cessation of march; those distances are then to be regained by hurrying to the front; the fatigue it occasions is incredible, particularly to the foot.

<sup>9</sup> F. R. *École de bataillon*, No. 189.

becomes still exceptionable, as, of a nature to occasion more fatigue than the case perhaps requires, the centinel must be alert on his post, but were he ordered to level at every noise he hears, the continual motion and over exertion would, probably, disable him from acting, when his services would be most urgently demanded. In this movement, ease should accompany regularity; where they do not interfere with each other, the march is pursued without difficulty, but where in opposition, they act in a contrary direction, circumstances can alone determine which of the two is to be sacrificed, and the distance of the enemy and the situation in which the column is placed, decide, whether the men are to be indulged, at the hazard of occupying somewhat more space than the body requires in line; or, if this be attended with danger, whether the constant readiness to formation, by preponderating, destroys the admissibility of such latitude.

From hence it will be readily inferred, that the file marching must always be inappropriate to the progress on a route,<sup>10</sup> since a double distance must be immediately taken up, if the principle be any way relaxed, and if the constraint of the close position be insisted upon, the advance of a battalion, for even a few hundred yards, must obviously be impracticable.

<sup>10</sup> See chap. v. § 7.

The considerable importance of the route march must forcibly strike, when it is reflected, that all strategick movements, including those which almost immediately precede the action and convey the troops to the field of battle, are chiefly thereby effected.<sup>11</sup> Thus extensive and preponderating in the scale of military manœuvres, it is difficult to account for the negligence which so frequently attends its execution, and no easy task to explain how it happens that regiments are so often permitted to relax in the performance of so important a manœuvre, and allowed to move over the ground in the slovenly manner occasionally witnessed; nay, even thus to proceed to a field of exercise, which, intended for instruction, must blast every prospect of success, by introducing disorderly practices and carelessness into a branch of the service, at once so important and of so frequent a recurrence—let it not be expected that, at a future period, attention can be readily recalled to objects on which, unaccustomed to be regarded, they have not been gradually fixed. Irregularities in military performances, if once grown into habit, like vices, are not to be eradicated at pleasure; in both we pursue with security

<sup>11</sup> How far the practice of the route march might, and ought to be extended to the tactical movements, has been explained in the preface, in which the advantages of assimilating the mode of performance on the parade to that of the field, and of securing a similar mode of operating, under both cases, have been equally demonstrated.



the path in which error led us, and when advanced too far, we are awakened by the danger when it is too late to recede; let care for the future make us cautious for the present, and let prudence dictate to us the rule, to execute our marches, whatever may be their intention or duration, with the utmost precision and the utmost regularity, so that, satisfying ourselves with the differences enumerated as distinguishing the column of route from the column of manœuvre, by admitting them as the only concessions that can be granted, we never venture to step beyond them; but to promote this orderly progress, the unmilitary practice of moving in double ranks must be abandoned,<sup>12</sup> and no battalion, or any part of it, be ever suffered, however inconsiderable may be the occasion which demands the march, to proceed but by the succession of its fractional divisions, companies, platoons, or smaller portions of the line.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> See chap. v. § 2.

<sup>13</sup> As the opinions of so distinguished an officer as the Duke of Wellington, must evidently stand paramount on military subjects, I have here succinctly presented a few of his instructions referring to the route march, which he issued during his campaigns in the Peninsula, and which are to be found in the collection of his orders, which have been offered to the public under the title of the *Principles of War*, exhibited in the practice of the camp, &c.

*Coimbra, 3rd May, 1809.*—Regular disposition of march to be kept up, to halt every hour and a half for five minutes, and no man to fall out and quit the ranks while on the march, except during the halts.

*Lousao, 16th March, 1811.*—To secure the progress in column, by ordering the march, by threes.

In proceeding to the enumeration of the principal rules relating to the route march, adverting to what has been explained in the preceding, it will appear, 1st, that troops should never march but on the principle of the open column, and, during progress, keep constantly the original ground required for formation ; 2nd, while the distances between the successive parts are carefully preserved, an additional space may be permitted to separate the ranks and the files, to facilitate the advance, and give ease to the men, as well as to avoid their crossing over the worst parts of the road ; the latter indulgence is, however, to be acted upon, without affecting the dress of the rank ; 3rd, the front, according to the British Regulations, should never exceed 18 files, but, influenced by circumstances,

*Quincoces, 17th June, 1813.*—Where distances are lost, the head to halt, and not the rear run up, which occasions considerable fatigue to troops.

*Badajos, 31st October, 1809.*—Divisions to practice twice a week the route march, and to perform about three leagues in marching order, the cavalry and artillery to be likewise so frequently practised.

*Badajos, 14th November, 1809.*—Those marches to be discontinued, on account of the bad weather.

*Villa Formosa, April 15th, 1811.*—The practice of the route march to re-commence.

*Frenada, 7th October, 1811.*—The route march to be practised once or twice a week.

*Madrid, 22d August, 1812.*—Divisions of infantry to march every third morning, from six to eight miles, and to manœuvre the other days.

may be reduced to three; where local situations admit, the column should yet, in preference, move under a greater breadth, at least five or six, and even ten or twelve, if possible; <sup>14</sup> 4th, cannon, if attached to the column, is only allowed to move between the battalions, and where removed to a flank, it is still preferable; 5th, mounted officers, and bat horses are, on no account, to be suffered to separate the divisions <sup>15</sup> and if the front be inconsiderable, and under six files, the latter must follow their respective brigades, which is, likewise, their situation whenever the column is reduced to half or quarter distance; 6th, peculiar attention is to be paid to obviate hurry in front, which, detri-

<sup>14</sup> It is yet to be recollected, that six files, particularly where two deep, must effectually secure against lengthening out, and answer even the ultimate intention of entering and wheeling into an alignement in order to form.

We have also noticed the advantage derived from placing troops at once on the smallest front they will be compelled to, during the progress of the day's march, but were circumstances to direct differently, and they were obliged to alter the front while in motion, it is an excellent rule among the French (*évolutions de ligne* No. 74), for all columns of the line to increase or decrease by corps, each battalion performing successively as it gains the ground the head one occupied, when it underwent the change.

<sup>15</sup> Major Palmer's Detail of the Line Movements, under the head of column of route, explains six files when on three ranks, and four when on two, to be the smallest front providing for the preservation of distances, and adds, that no advantage results from marching above 16 or 18 files; bat horses may be allowed between the brigades.

mental to order, would frequently compel the rear to run, in order to keep up, and if so, occasion considerable fatigue: on that account, a non-commissioned officer is recommended always to head the column, to direct the advance; were he provided with a plummet, he would probably be more efficient in the discharge of this duty; 7th, in the column of the line, as a further precaution, an aid-de-camp<sup>16</sup> should constantly remain in rear, to apprize the general of any extraordinary occurrence, or any considerable loss of distance, which latter, if happening, can merely be remedied by the head halting, and rear coming up, for, were the head, under those circumstances, to continue in motion, the utmost disorder must inevitably result from so injudicious a direction; 8th, another remark which, strictly speaking, belongs to discipline, but which still from its propinquity to the present subject, claims admittance, is, that no man should be allowed to quit the ranks without permission, and without due precaution be taken for his immediate return, which latter, the leaving of a non-commissioned officer with him, or, the delivery of his firelock to his comrade, will most effectually secure.

<sup>16</sup> This precaution is inserted in the *F. R. école de bataillon*, 185; it is easily conceived, that in the proximity of an enemy, a column must be provided with a van guard, rear guard, as well as with side patroles, and that all obstructions encountered a-head, must be immediately reported.

It was a custom among the Romans, who were so conspicuously eminent in their marches, to start about three o'clock in the morning, and to perform about seven leagues in about eight hours, so that reaching their destination at about eleven o'clock, they were at full leisure to provide for every necessary of life, as well as to trace out and fortify their camp, which precaution they never neglected should their stay be even confined to the day.<sup>17</sup> As night marches should, however, be avoided, an invariable rule, under the various seasons the climate of Northern Europe presents, cannot well be given, yet, where nothing to direct to the contrary, the marching off from eight to ten in the winter, and from four to five in the summer, will generally answer every intention of progress and comfort to the men; as for the distances to be performed daily, nothing satisfactorily can be alleged, as it must entirely depend on circumstances; the im-

<sup>17</sup> Josephus, in describing the march of the Roman army against Jerusalem (*De bello Judaico*), mentions, that the infantry moved six in front; this, I believe, to be the only instance recorded in ancient history, of the number of files performed upon in the route march. As the Roman army, under Titus, was, however, then formed six deep, it leaves a strong presumption of their marches to have been at the time, performed by the flank, if so, they, very probably, moved 10 a-breast, when previously, they were placed 10 deep, at least, as far as the roads permitted; the Roman soldier, while carrying a weight of 60 pounds, used to leave behind eight miles in three hours, and Cicero informs us (*Tusc. Quest*, book iii), that it was customary for the Roman soldiers to carry their provisions for a fortnight.

mense advantage resulting from rapidity in strategick movements, so frequently recorded in the annals of the world, and the multifarious instances which might be produced, to redound in its praise, must for ever silence the voice which would attempt to depreciate the importance of expedition, but still in this, as in every other human transaction, there are limits to be kept, which it would be unreasonable, nay, even imprudent to transgress, for, as the proportion of stragglers left behind, always keeps pace with the number of miles stepped over, the feeble and harassed remnant, if too much hurry were insisted upon, may ultimately remain unequal to the task and performance expected; the 10th regiment of foot, we are told, retreated from Kilkenny to Dublin, (70 miles) in 24 hours,<sup>13</sup> but, as this was an extraordinary exer-

<sup>13</sup> "When Thurot landed near Carrickfergus, in February, 1760, the 10th regiment of foot, cantoned in the vicinity of Kilkenny, began their march at twelve at night, under lieutenant colonel Gisborne, and the greater part reached Dublin in 24 hours, (notwithstanding the inclement season), which is a distance of 56 (upwards of 70 English miles and a half) Irish miles, at 2240 yards each." *Military Collections and Remarks*, by Major Donkin, a work in which many useful principles are blended with anecdotes relating to the British army.

In the strategical movements that preceded the battle of Salamanca, Marshal Marmont's troops, after passing the Douro, at Torresillas, was, by the extraordinary exertion of a march of 40 miles, early on the morning of the 18th, on the Trabancos; *Lieutenant Colonel Jones' account of the war in Spain, Portugal, and the south of France*, vol. ii. chap. xiv.

tion, not intended to be repeated the next day, it can never be adduced as a precedent, it evidently displays what a disciplined regiment, consisting of men well disposed, is capable of, and reflects the highest credit on the corps; but, while it may induce imitation, it can never be produced as an instance to compel repetition. General Rogniat, whose name we have had frequent occasion to mention before, conceives, that when several bodies of troops are on the march, in order to assemble to a general *rendezvous*, they may, while out of reach of the enemy, perform about 10 leagues (30 miles) a day; this appears much, but when we reflect on the rank he held in an army, which, under General Buonaparte, was so frequently called to perform that description of performance, and, which principally owed its successes to the rapidity of its strategick movements and reunion of masses, and consider the experience he must therefore have attained in this branch of the service, we feel inclined to listen and tacitly to submit to his assertion; he does not deny that, if repeated and kept up for a certain time, a large number of men will be left behind, and he does not conceal, likewise, that among those who keep up, considerable dissatisfaction will prevail; and that, he says, among the officers, as well as their inferiors; but the important object which gave occasion, and compelled to the extraordinary speed, will, by it,

be obtained.<sup>19</sup> In those cases where the soldiers are wearied out by long and tedious marches, as well as constant duties, the voice of nature will be

<sup>19</sup> Rogniat's *Considérations sur l'art de la guerre*, conclusion of chap. x. ; as the passage itself will probably give satisfaction to the reader, I have ventured a loose translation of it ; it runs as follows. " As a model of the kind, I shall offer the celebrated march of the French, in 1805, where, rapidly leaving the borders of the ocean, to surround the Austrians, at Huhn, the various corps of the French army departed from Boulogne, Holland, Hanover, and Brest, at periods, proportionate to the distances they had to perform, and by several roads verging towards a same spot, united, near Hulm, in the rear of the Austrian army, with a rapidity which allowed even no time for the report to spread of their approach. The enemy's general, who hardly suspected their departure, and, who was still less aware of the intention, was merely apprized of the danger, when he saw, as by the effect of magick, a formidable army pass the Danube, and take post on his line of operation ; how fortune was pleased to crown those admirable marches, and the success they had, is known.

" In the opening of a campaign, where every thing depends on the celerity of the movements, the columns, as long as distant from the enemy, and while they are not yet obliged to be strictly guarded, under the immediate precaution of fore, hind, and side patrols, may be subjected to a performance of 10 leagues a day (30 miles). Those forced marches, it is true, when kept up for several days, will leave many stragglers to the rear ; but there are instances where the circumstance of the whole arriving, and the leaving of none behind, is unimportant, provided a sufficient number, when required, can still be mustered. When 120,000 men are on the march, to strike a decisive blow, you must not apprehend the loss of 20,000 who remain in rear ; it is sufficient that 100,000 can be brought to the distant point to complete the



heard, and apparently transgress the laws of discipline, but the great point is here to lead the men on. When Frederick the great performed the memorable march from Saxony to Silesia, while surrounded by three enemies' armies, every one of which was equal to his own, his men, exhausted by fatigue and want, were loudly expressing their discontent, and openly complaining of the hardships to which they were subjected; his generals, apprehensive that this spirit of dissatisfaction might be the forerunner of some more serious disturbances, reported to the king, the unfavourable state of his army, but he, little alarmed, and less surprised at an event he most probably anticipated, merely inquired whether his men were advancing, and on being replied to in the affirmative, he answered, well, if they march, I have no objection to their murmuring; the enlightened monarch was too well acquainted with the human heart to

“purpose; after the precipitate march has conveyed you to the  
 “desired spot, you must rest a few days to rally the men; the  
 “officers will loudly exclaim against those marches of 10 leagues,  
 “but no notice should be taken of it, and you may depend that,  
 “amidst the murmurs and complaints, most will arrive. Experience  
 “evinces that they are not above what the generality of men are  
 “capable of, but we are generally endowed with more strength than  
 “good-will to exert it. I do not think, however, that longer  
 “marches than those mentioned, should ever be required from  
 “troops; nature has its limits, the boundaries of which it is necessary for the general ably to discern, so as to secure the utmost of  
 “what is attainable, without ever venturing to demand that which  
 “cannot be reasonably expected.”

attempt, by an untimely severity, the repression of a spirit, the cause of which he discriminated, not to spring from a breach of discipline, but to be the mere impulse of a feeling, which, implanted in our bosoms, prompts the depressed to complain; he therefore, under the existing calamity, thought he might well indulge the weakness of the man, provided he could secure the duty of the soldier.

## CHAPTER IX.

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### ECHELLON.<sup>1</sup>

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This is one of those movements which I have distinguished by the appellation of imperfect formations; a name I have given to them to insinuate their inapplication to action, and the mixed nature they display, when compared to those of a purer description, namely, the line and column.

The echellons may be considered as of two kinds, the direct and the oblique: of these, the first is more particularly adapted to the great movements of the line, while the latter, though not entirely excluded from such a performance, is more inclined to favour the evolutions of one or two battalions; they both derive their names from the French word *echelle*, which has been bestowed on them, owing

<sup>1</sup> R. and R. part iii. echellon; part iv. echellon, § 200.

to the particular situation in which the separated parts are thrown relatively to each other, when under those constructions, and which places them in a manner not unlike the steps of a ladder.

The direct echellon is formed by the several divisions of the line stepping off successively, and perpendicularly to the front or rear; when this takes place on a flank division, as the whole follow in succession till the contrary side is put in motion, it constitutes what is called the direct echellon (*fig. 189*), but, if the movement be conducted by a central division, as the two wings act separately, and follow both at the same time, it forms what is denominated the double echellon (*fig. 190*); of these positions, the first is readily taken up by a column, if its divisions, except the head one which stands fast, all face and file into the relative situations the disposition requires (*fig. 191*). As to the oblique echellons, they are equally convertible from the line, as well as the column, and, under either case, obtained by the divisions performing a wheel less than the quarter of the circle (*fig. 192, 194.*)

To retrace the analogy, those echellons display to the line and to the column, it merely needs to observe for the direct echellon (*fig. 189*), that the former position is hardly deviated from, and that, while it operates in a manner perfectly alike, by conveying troops into a parallel alignment to that quitted; it may, during process, not improperly be considered, but as a broken line, the parts of which

are merely momentarily separated, and so nearly connected to the extended, its relation to the successive formation is not in any manner weakened from it, for we shall feel no less inclined to retrace the column, in the gradual situation in which the fractional parts are made to follow each other. As for the oblique echelon (*fig. 194*), the deviation from the straight alignment is so trifling, that where the wheels are inconsiderable, it is not unfrequently viewed but as a species of line, which primitive position is, besides, kept up throughout, by the inward flanks preserved in their former situations in line, and while it thus approaches to the extended position: on the other hand, the distances at which the same pivots, or inward flank men, are placed and moved, which, as in the open column, are equal each to the front of the preceding division, secure the resemblance to the latter formation, which similarity is still strengthened by general appearance, and, by the necessity of retaining the same intervals in both, to facilitate the recovery of the line; and lastly, a striking feature, which still ties faster the link of connexion between the column and the echelon, both direct and oblique, is the parallelism of divisions they all exhibit. But, if thus far alike, a considerable difference now arises in the relative positions the divisions assume under those three formations (the direct echelon, the oblique echelon, and column) when compared to that they occupy in line, as well as the different ground taken up by the applications of

those three movements, since, where the direct echellon is referred to, the parts move parallel to the alignement they have left, and the new line is also parallel to that relinquished ; if the echellon be oblique, the motion and the new line will be oblique ; or if the latter be parallel it will outflank the old one ; while the divisions will be placed perpendicularly to their former positions in line by the column, and by it the body be removed to the prolongation of the ground, on which it stood before.

It becomes an immediate consequence in the oblique echellon, as its formation is derived from wheels on the standing pivots, for those pivots, or inward flanks, as they are also called, to preserve their original distances (*fig. 194*), as otherwise they would no longer admit the immediate re-forming of the line, by the mere application of the contrary movement, and by the divisions stepping back over the very arch they passed over to gain the oblique position ; but this facility to present a line, by wheeling to the rear, is not repeated in the direct echellon, where it demands previous arrangements, and the placing of the successive parts so as to establish the proportionate space and relative position between the echellons, to convert into line by the circular motion ; if so the body will by the evolution be brought into an oblique direction to that it quitted, a z (*fig. 189*), as well as to that which, by the operation, was apparently designed, a y. It is this immediate transition into a line, so little expected, which, while it renders the direct echellon instrumental to its for-

mation, assimilates it to the oblique order of attack,<sup>2</sup> a manœuvre, which its successive progress also favours, by admitting a part of the force to

\* By the oblique order of battle, is understood the disposition of an attack which offered in an inclined line, is intended to act against a wing of the enemy's army which thus taken in flank and overpowered by a superior force, in giving way, generally leads to complete discomfiture. The first introduction of this movement is generally ascribed to Epaminondas who, it is said, employed it at the battle of Leuctra. In the work of Vegetius (*De re militari*) it is enumerated among the different orders of battle, and inserted as number sixth. In subsequent ages it was neglected, but not escaping the diligent researches of the Chevalier de Folard, it was in 1644, according to that French author, employed by the gallant Marquis of Montrose at the battle of Aberdeen, in which, refusing one wing and reinforcing the other, he fell on the republican troops that imprudently had advanced straight forward, and thus experienced a total defeat; however this oblique array was not truly revived before Frederick the second brought it into fresh reputation, by the successful applications he made of it at Prague and at Lissa (Leuthen.)

According to a representation the Count of Nassau gives of the battle of Cannæ, in his *Annibal et Scipion*, the advanced centre of the Carthaginians army was in a direct echelon instead of the lunar curve described by Polybius (*Lunarem faciens curvaturam et extenuans hanc ipsorum figuram*), nor is, as Folard observes, the surmise unreasonable, as the centre is mentioned to have fallen back at the commencement of the action, so as to have offered a concave, instead of the convex position it did before; a movement, the echelon disposition much favours, as it merely requires the straight advance and retreat of the corps, but which in the circular form could not have taken place without considerable confusion, and might be fairly viewed as impracticable. This small volume of the Count de Nassau, which is intended to illustrate the second Punic war, is much esteemed, and may offer a copious fund of information, both to the statesman and to the soldier.

be withdrawn, while the other is engaged, which is likewise a strong as well as distinctive feature of that inclined disposition.

The direct echelon, chiefly introduced by Frederick the Great, underwent, like most innovations, the strict scrutiny of inquiry; and as people were disposed, or averse to the Prussian system, it was extolled above, or depreciated below the standard of truth; without therefore producing all which was alleged to establish its excellence, or depreciate its merit, we feel inclined, after an impartial view, to acquiesce in its readiness to facilitate all changes in the position of a body of troops, as well as to admit its favourable application for the attack and retreat; for similar to the march in line, alike in its ultimate result of removing troops into a parallel position to that they previously occupied, the progress, from being in separate bodies, much tends to alleviate execution, as well as to facilitate the difficult operation of dress, which, confined in it within the narrower compass of the successive parts, removes all danger of propagating mistakes, the effects of which, by ceasing on the flank of the very echelon in which they occur, can have no undue influence on the general line. Where performed by one of two battalions, an oblique line may be taken up by the divisions wheeling back into the alignment shewn (a z *fig.* 189); but, where applied to an army or a line of infantry, this will seldom or ever be attempted, and this movement more generally



be referred to favour a successive attack, which the lines of two or three battalions, that follow each other, are wonderfully calculated to promote, as sufficiently strong to act by themselves, they will, without committing the whole, be individually capable to enter into action.<sup>3</sup> The body, by being thus broken and separated on the march, will likewise be more easily managed, and while the head is engaged, the rear may either come up to take an active part, or be kept in reserve to protect the retreat of those more advanced, or again manœuvre so as to gain such oblique disposition as the circumstance of protection, or that of improving an advantage, may suggest as eligible. As the advanced echellons are protected by those in their immediate rear, it merely demands, when operating on the extremity of a line, for the leading body to be secured against attempt on its outward flank, but this even will no longer be requisite if the movement be central.

The last application of the direct echellon, as it seemingly contradicts the assertion previously made respecting its use not to be extended to action,

<sup>3</sup> As the King of Prussia observed at Rosbach the inefficacy which the presenting of a line obliquely, had to obviate general engagement; and the inability in a general to check his troops, when they were once so immediately involved in their entire, he substituted at Lissa (Leuthen) the successive attack by the direct echellon. At the battle of Vittoria, the advance made in front of the centre, to co-operate with General Hill's attack on the left, was executed by regiments in echellon.

it becomes incumbent to explain, that notwithstanding troops are here described, as contending under the echellon position, it is, obviously, but those a-head that partake of the conflict, which accordingly takes place in line, and that, while those advanced are busily employed, the others in rear are evidently but spectators of the fight, in which they take no direct part, until they come up, when, by taking their ground in the prolongation of the alignement of those already engaged, they join the conflict the very instant they cease to be in echellon. Now a disposition can hardly be viewed as appropriated to action, that must be abandoned to take share in it; but were this even insufficient to carry conviction, a position which will most forcibly illustrate the echellon to be a temporary formation, not inclined to combat, is, the necessity for troops thus situated, if attacked in their entire, immediately to relinquish an order of array so ill suited for defence.

When the following echellons are separated by a considerable space the outward flanks must be covered by artillery. Too great a distance, however, is here not recommendable, from 100 to 150 paces will generally answer the purpose. Colonel Bulow, who, while he attempted to contract the rules of high tacticks within the narrow limits of a few geometrical theorems,<sup>4</sup> endeavoured to deride,

<sup>4</sup> This extraordinary production published, during the revolutionary war, by Colonel Bulow, under the name of *Geist der neuern kreighs-*

may to overturn, the whole of the minor rules that had hitherto directed the interior regulations of the art, has, it may be well imagined, not allowed the echellon to escape the common censure. He ac-

*tem* begins by a few geometrical theorems, whose principles although they can merely refer to some particular strategical cases, are still ingenious, and where they recur, the application of the theoretical rules deduced from them will probably be attended with advantage. But then proceeding to the infantry movements, he grounds his system on the hypothesis, that our present weapons do not admit of the close contest, and runs into all the extravagancies such a doctrine may lead to. Convinced that an orderly execution is of no moment, he condemns compactness, recommends the attack in open files, deprecates both the echellon and square, to which latter he still condescends to offer some amendments: much extols eccentric retreats, and taking a view of our firelock, noticing its defects, he gives some slight hints in behalf of the pike; without which weapon, he establishes, all effectual resistance against cavalry impracticable. Thus running through a series of most absurd opinions, growing bolder as he goes along, he concludes by asserting that, if discipline and courage might have had formerly some influence on the events of a campaign, they will no longer be of any consequence, as future wars will be solely decided by superiority in numbers; hence, says he, no disciplined troops will be capable of resisting an armed multitude. This axiom he most unhappily illustrates, by what occurred in Brabant, and in Poland; examples, to say the least of them, he might perhaps have produced as exceptions, since, far from asserting the principle in both those events, the irresistible power of a regular army, has shewn itself most conspicuously: yet such was the absence of theoretical knowledge and military acquirements, that this rhapsody enjoyed for a short time, a considerable reputation; offered in military tactics the chief material to a work of great celebrity, and which treats on all sciences; was translated into several languages; and may be perused by the English reader in his own tongue.

cordingly represents it as a weak formation, the successive attempts of which are incapable of any effect, while the separate bodies in it are left unprotected on their flanks ; for if the divisions move at 300 paces from each other, he says, those defects are obvious, and if they are nearer, the expected advantage to be derived from the succession is lost, as they cannot avoid immediate engagement, and, consequently, those in rear no longer provide for the promised protection, in the event of failure ; as the head is besides generally strengthened, and the refused flank weakened, if turned and attacked in the latter point, the echelon position, he adds, is incapable of resistance ; thus defective, he condemns its use, but admits that, under the disadvantage of a decided inferiority, or in other hopeless cases, it may occasionally be resorted to as one among the few other desperate expedients, which are then called in to save from immediate destruction. General Jomini,<sup>a</sup> in his able treatise on the great operations of war, does not coincide in sentiments with this Prussian officer, since far from depreciating the echelon formation, in alleging its efficacy, by producing all the advantages before enumerated, he seems to think that its application at the battle of *Kolm* (Kollin), might have favoured the hero, who himself had enriched the infantry manœuvres with its admittance, as the repulse General Hulsen there experienced, would not have

<sup>a</sup> *Jomini*, vol. i. chap. ii. *Siege de Prague, bataille de Kollin*.

been of the serious consequence it became, had a successive instead of a continued line been offered. Availing himself of the opportunity the description of this victory of the Austrians gave him, to enlarge on this subject, he observes the eligibility of those attacks in echellon, where the carrying of a certain point in the position is the important consideration of the day ; but he lays great stress, where so referred, on the leading body, whether flank or central, to be strongly reinforced, which he adds can meet with no inconvenience, if the refused flank be well secured. He accordingly recommends that, besides the two lines of infantry, and the line of cavalry which forms a third, that a strong body of horse (*fig. 198*), should attend the assailing echellon, and in following its motion, answer the two-fold purpose of pursuing the enemy, if victorious, or checking his advance, if repulsed.

The oblique echellon is of a later date, and, in many particulars, different from the movement just spoken of, yet its appearance, general character, and perhaps more so, the gradual situation in which it places the divisions, like the steps of a ladder, have, however, induced the blending of them together, under the same appellation. It is to Major Mauvillon, I believe, we are indebted for this evolution, which he first describes in his *Essai sur l'influence de la poudre à canon*;<sup>6</sup> it possesses

<sup>6</sup> Major Mauvillon's *Essai sur l'influence de la poudre à canon*, chap. iv. evolutions ; as the wheeling back were not practised at the time, the formation into line is forwards on the outward flank instead

the peculiar advantage, of drawing troops towards a flank at the same time that they are gaining ground to the front. By the wheel of the eighth of the circle, as the divisions are brought to face, and made to move along the diagonal, the distance gained to the front and to the flank will be alike ; but from a wheel, exceeding the eighth of a circle, a greater inclination will be derived, whilst from a wheel below that portion of the circumference, less obliquity is obtained ; a theory the positions assumed by the divisions, as they approximate to the perpendicular or diverge from it, will render obvious (*fig. 195*).

As the oblique, like the direct echellon, when seen at a distance, has much the appearance of a line, the deception would seem favourable to move troops sideways while advancing in order to gain an enemy's flank, were the unwelcome reflection of the perplexity, which must attend the motion of a considerable body so subdivided, not to thwart the expedient, and to restrain its application to the smaller force of one, two, or, to the utmost, three battalions.

of backwards on the inward (*fig. 196*) ; this which is never so favourable is particularly objectionable when the divisions are unequal.

## SECTION II.

*Formation and March of the Direct Echellon.\**

We have already noticed the echellons to be of two kinds, the direct and the oblique, and likewise seen that they may be both formed from the line as well as the column.

The direct echellon is accomplished from the line by the several portions intended to break into, that separately and successively step off, so as to leave an ordered distance between them; thus, for instance, were the movement by companies and from the right, the right company, after the delivery of the caution,<sup>7</sup> receives the word *march*, to move forwards, and the second captain awaits till the first has taken the number of paces, which completes the directed interval (in *fig. 189*, 16 paces), to put his men in motion, delivering, likewise, the word *march* to that effect; this is repeated by the third when the second gains its distance, and followed up by every division, which, each at the command of its respective leader, is put in motion, as that

<sup>7</sup> R. and R. part iii. echellon, changes of position by echellons § 154, 155, 158, 163; echellon changes by subdivisions, or sections, § 164, 165; part iv. echellon movements of the line, § 197, 199, 200.

<sup>8</sup> *The battalion will advance by companies' (grand-divisions' or any part) at 16 (or any number of) paces distance' and form direct echellon—march*, at which the first proceeds, those following receive the

on its right (here the directing side) has acquired the specified space ordered to separate the echellons. As the platoon officers are, in this movement, invariably on the inward flanks, they, at the caution, leave the right to shift to the left, when ever that side heads and conducts the motion (B, *fig.* 189).<sup>9</sup>

It will easily occur that, whatever may be the distances left between the echellons, those posted on the inward flanks, and who, according to the British system, are the directing officers, must altogether form a line (a z *fig.* 189), which oblique to that originally started from as well as to the present direction of march, will be more or less extended as the intervals separating the following bodies are more or less considerable: should, therefore, this alignement be taken up during the advance, the distance and relative position between those inward pivots, must necessarily be so

same command *march*, to start off successively from their own officers.

If to the rear, the line is first faced about, or the echellons may successively change front, previous to their being put on the march.

<sup>9</sup> Officers, when in echelon, are invariably posted on the inward flank, they therefore remove to the left, whenever the left leads, but when it is the right, this alteration is not requisite, as they are already on that flank, when in line; this inward situation in the platoon leaders, is also adopted by the Danes, but it appears that formerly, and at the first introduction into the Prussian infantry, the officers were on the outward flank, at least in the oblique echelon (*Scharnhorst handbuch für officiere*, vol. iii. § 80); this was probably owing to the formation which was at that time, to the front, as unless it be to re-form by wheeling forwards, the inward station is, in every respect, preferable.



contrived, as to allow the divisions, in wheeling back, to fill up the spaces left asunder ;<sup>10</sup> were this neglected, chasms, or want of room, must inevitably result from the inattention. We have precedently observed, that when the direct echellon is performed on a flank division, and the whole follow in a regular succession, it constitutes what is called the simple echellon ; but, that where a central point is named to act upon, as the wings follow separately, and each by itself the operation is denominated the double echellon.<sup>11</sup>

We have had, likewise, occasion to remark the direct echellon, when formed from the column, to be restricted to a flank performance, on the front

<sup>10</sup> As the line a b, and a d (*fig. 193*), whatever may be the interval left between the echellons, must together exceed the hypotenuse a c, it is absolutely necessary for the divisions in the direct echellon, when they are to take up the oblique a z, to gain ground to the directing side by the flank march, and for the following echellon to have a part of the files on the inward flank covered by that in its front before they can wheel back into line.

<sup>11</sup> Mauvillon (*Appendice du septième livre Monarchie Prussienne*, plate 71, and explanations), conceives those double echellons to offer but an unfrequent application ; where an intermediate point in the enemy's position is, however, the weak part, or is that intended to be carried, and both flanks can be well secured, while the centre is brought forwards, their utility, he adds, cannot be denied. Had the English been in echellon, at Fontenoy, instead of the two obliques they formed in rear of the advanced centre, they would, says the same author, have certainly secured the victory, for the cavalry would then have been able to act, and to follow up the advantages already obtained by the infantry, as well as have prevented the French from rallying.

or rear division ; when the former is the intention, the head division stands still, and the others face to the pivot side, and by the flank march, move till, cleared in front, they have gained their relative situations (*fig.* 191). The distance, at which they are then placed, will be a space equal to their front, which might, however, be easily increased or decreased as required. Were the evolution designed to the rear, and the last division directed to lead, the column, previous to its converting into the echellon formation, must change its front by either facing about, or, by the counter-march of divisions in files ; after it has thus been brought to face its former rear, it performs in the manner explained before.

That the column is precluded from a central execution, and a conversion into a double echellon, its very construction reveals ; since it could not be attempted either without reverting to long and complicated movements, or without intruding on the primitive arrangement of the battalion. This observation, however, which applies to the divisions of a single battalion, can have no reference to the operations of the line, in which the several corps may, without inconvenience and detriment to regularity, diverge to either flank, some to the right, and some to the left ; for, as the battalions then remain in their entire, their interior arrangements are preserved, and it is their relative situations in the line only that are affected by it, which latter, we have already seen, is of no tactical consideration.

Did, during the advance, the head echelon require to be changed, a cessation of march must precede the alteration; the named division is then called to the front, put on the march, and followed by the rest, which await their proper turn to step off, each at the voice of its leader.<sup>12</sup>

When the direct echelon is performed by one or two battalions, the distances are trifling, and rarely exceeding the front operated on, which latter then seldom exceeds that of grand division, and is not unfrequently confined to the platoon; but when the evolution is taken up by a line, as the divisions commonly consist of two or three battalions, and sometimes even more, the space left between them is increased from 100 to 150 paces;<sup>13</sup> when

<sup>12</sup> *Fig. 200 A*, represents an interchange of flanks, the right originally conducted, and the left is called a-head; *B* shows where the left is in front, and a centre division is brought forwards.

<sup>13</sup> General Saldern (*Elements of Tactics*, part iii. § 45, attacks *en echelon*) will not allow the echellons to be nearer than 100 paces to each other: this is consistent with our present practice, which generally establishes this interval, from 100 to 150 paces; circumstances may still demand a greater separation; when so remote, the divisions in rear are, for greater protection, to be covered by artillery and cavalry. We have already seen, that General Jomini recommends a strong body of horse to follow the assailing echelon (*fig. 198*); Major Palmer adds (*Detail of the line movements*, on the echelon movements of the line), "a strong column of troops will generally be posted in rear of the attacking flank, ready to support it, or to extend to that wing, to outflank the enemy, or to improve any advantage that may be gained. The retired echellons being the refused wing of your line, need not such support." But all this must be understood as applying when the echellons con-

thus performed by a considerable force, besides the purpose of partial attack, the ultimate design of the direct echellon might be the removal of troops in an advanced or retired position, either parallel or inclined; but where performed by the platoons, or grand divisions of one or two battalions, it might additionally be intended to take up the oblique (a z, *fig.* 189), displayed by the inward officers. The manner in which those various evolutions and formations are accomplished will be explained in the the fifth section, where, with the alignements derived from the obliques, they will all appear under the head of formation of the line from echellon.

When from line the direct echellon is to be formed to the rear, the line is first either faced about, or made to alter its front by the counter-march; after this change is effected, the execution is similar to that detailed, where it recurs on the original front.

### *March of the direct Echellon.*

The attentions and rules respecting the march of the direct echellon may be enumerated as follows:

sist of several corps, for, where less, and merely of the fractional parts of a battalion, they are much nearer approached. Count Turpin de Crissé, in his *Commentaries on Vegetius*, seems to think that the divisions (two platoons, which corresponds to our grand division) of two battalions, when so following, should step at about 50 paces distance.

*First*, Although troops may occasionally be compelled to refer to the oblique pace while in progress under the direct echelon position, the line of march will generally, and almost constantly, be confined to the straight direction.

*Second*, The great precautions to be adopted while marching in echelon, are, the preservation of the parallelism, the relative situation, and the enjoined distance: it is to the inward officers those attentions are chiefly entrusted; they are, besides, occasionally, by the quick glance of the eyes along the line of pivots, to ascertain that they move within the oblique line (a z, *fig.* 189), in which those pivot officers are constantly to remain, while under the present formation.

*Third*, Mounted officers, in superintending the general movement, are to be particularly observant to see the ordered intervals between the successive echellons, as well as those directed to be left between the corps, duly preserved, and to notice that the outward flanks be not thrown to the front, which latter position would expose troops to the enfilade of the enemy's artillery. By keeping the two inward officers of the two leading echellons in the true line and relative position, those mounted officers will establish the base of an oblique, which the other platoon chiefs are to prolong, and obtain points to direct their future correction.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Major Palmer says (*Detail of the line movements*, on § 197, 82nd manœuvre), "In direct echellons, commanding officers act "as if marching in line, (see section 201), each placing himself ten

*Fourth*, When the echellon is connected with a line, it is invariably depending on such a line, and regulated by it, but where this assistance is not offered, the echellons move, and are directed by their inward flanks, so long as, not exceeding the front of half a battalion; but, if above the half, and to the front of a battalion, they are regulated by two advanced serjeants, who, sent forwards, mark in the prolongation of the alignment of the preceding echellon, the spots where the inward flank and the centre of their own corps are to be placed (*fig. 199*), when it takes post next to it in line; lastly, if the echellons consist of several battalions, the advance is conducted on the principle of the march in line,

“ paces behind the rear rank, in the centre of his battalion, and in  
 “ the file of the directing serjeant; thus situated, he is ready to  
 “ comply with the alterations made by the directing battalion, com-  
 “ municated by his adjutant, who is on that flank which is nearest  
 “ to the leading echellon; but in taking up the oblique line in 83rd  
 “ manœuvre, the commanding officer wheels up, and dresses his  
 “ first division in the new line, when it arrives on it, and thence cor-  
 “ rects the succeeding divisions on the adjutant, who has placed  
 “ himself on the true alignment.

“ In direct echellons, each adjutant is posted in the rear of his  
 “ battalion on that flank next the *directing battalion*, informing the  
 “ commanding officer of any necessary change, to comply with its  
 “ movements, but particularly preserving the interval, and instantly  
 “ reporting any deviation from it.

“ In the 83rd movement, the moment the flank division of echel-  
 “ lon touches the new oblique line, the whole are halted, the adju-  
 “ tants move out, and successively mark their ground from the divi-  
 “ sion first formed on the new line.”

the inward battalion, which, in each, acts as that of direction, is however, while it guides the progress, in order to maintain the general connexion, to dispatch additionally to the front the two non-commissioned officers before alluded to; they, accordingly, in the continuation of the preceding echellon, likewise mark the ground where their own inward flank and centre are to be situated, when their corps takes post in its prolongation, but this is not repeated by the other battalions, which, while on the march, move by their own centre and their advanced serjeants, who step six paces in front, and which, as to the line of dress, are solely regulated by their own flank battalion that in every echellon invariably regulates the motion (*fig. 199*). The outward officer of the leading echellon, who conducts the march of the whole, moves on given objects.

*Fifth*, When the movement concludes by the taking up of a parallel alignment, and by forming on the front or regulating echellon, that front or regulating echellon halts; the second marches up to its advanced serjeants, who have ceased their progress, as the body, the motion of which they accompanied, has been fixed in the alignment. Should the echellon consist of several corps, a non-commissioned officer of each of those not regulating, is, likewise, ordered forwards to take his station where the centre of his own corps is to arrive; those non-commissioned officers, from being thus previously posted, offer so many points to facilitate

the future dress and formation ; this regular process is equally repeated for those following, so that every echellon, as it reaches the alignement, has a line of non-commissioned officers to direct its position.<sup>15</sup>

*Sixth*, When obstacles intervene, the echellon or echellons impeded in their progress must contract their front and file to the rear, so as to obviate the difficulty, and accomplish this without obtruding on the march of those following. The echellons immediately next to those, thus effected by local circumstances, and thrown out of their lines of march, are carefully to preserve their relative positions and distances, so that the general movement may not suffer from the partial deviation.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Major Cunninghame, in conformity to the Rules and Regulations, directs (*Tactick of the British army*, 13th manœuvre) two advanced serjeants of the flank battalion, to march with the preceding echellon, to mark the centre and inward flank of their own, and when the corps in rear, come up to join the line of those in their front, for every battalion, not on the extremity of the echellon, and directing, likewise to dispatch a non-commissioned officer to display its centre : this is also expressed by Major Palmer (*Detail of the Line Movements*, § 197, 82nd manœuvre), he, however, sends forwards two officers, instead of two non-commissioned officers, and with great propriety points out that the persons so sent to the front, on appraisal of formation, by the battalions not on the flank, to mark their own centre in the intended alignement, should be mounted officers.

<sup>16</sup> In the French army, the direct echellon is performed to the front, and to the rear, and by regiments as well as by brigades (*F. R. Evolutions de Ligne*, 495—518) ; the distance at which the echellons move, is commonly 100 paces, but it may be either in-



## SECTION III.

*Formation and March of the oblique Echellon.*

The rule fixed in the preceding, and which subjects the oblique echellon, in its formation, both

creased or decreased, according to the views and intentions of the commandant; the echellons proceed on the principle of the march in line; the inward flank battalion acts as the regulating corps, and, as in the leading echellon, this latter, in a great measure, directs the whole, it is secured within the perpendicular march by the additional aid of two *jalousseurs* (markers) (*fig. 201*). As a further assistance to the preservation of order, and the original intervals which are to separate the divisions, a non-commissioned officer of the right platoon (*un serre-file du peloton de droite*), follows, in every echellon, the inward file of that preceding (he would probably be of the left platoon, were the left to lead). When the line is to be re-formed, the first echellon is first situated in the true position, by the means of the *guides généraux*, the colours and *guides de pelotons*, according to the French mode of dressing in an alignement, the second in coming up, is halted, as it reaches within four paces of the ground it is to occupy, when its colours and *guides généraux* are likewise placed in the alignement, and the battalions dress on them and on their *guides de pelotons*, which have also taken post: this is successively repeated till all are moved on the line: so soon as one echellon is properly situated, its platoon *guides* are withdrawn, but the *guides généraux*, and colours remain to the front till the whole have come up, and are formed, when, at the word *drapeaux à vos places*, delivered by the chief commander of the line, they also leave their advanced positions: had the firing, however, immediately commenced as the first echellon took post, or before the whole had come up, the colours alone would remain to the front, but the *guides généraux* be withdrawn, and made to join the ranks.

from the line as well as the column, to a wheel, below the quarter of the circle, though it seems to promise simplicity in performance, assumes the appearance of intricacy when referred to in practice; as some difficulty arises in determining the ratio that is to regulate the portion of the circumference, which the particular degree of obliquity requires; for, as it varies according as the front of the operating division is more or less considerable, and it offers different results where the same number of paces are taken<sup>17</sup> under different numbers of files, such an inconsistency seems of a nature to baffle all attempts at reducing the evolution under accurate and defined principles; thus, for instance, were two divisions, one of 16 and the other of 8 files, to wheel, each eight paces, while the latter would complete the quarter of the circle (90 degrees) by it, the former would have merely traced out its half, the eighth (45 degrees) (*fig. 195*); hence the embarrassment and delay that must attend a movement which demands previous calculation, and a different word of command, to express a same obliquity, according to the strength of the divisions it is meant for, is palpable, and, although the expected equality between those of a battalion may promise some alleviation, the prospect is again darkened when it is reflected,

<sup>17</sup> This is easily explained in the front of the division, which, in acting as the radius to the circumference traced out by the wheeling man, must increase that circumference as the operating front is more considerable.

that this equality, notwithstanding it may refer to those of the battalion, cannot reasonably be supposed to exist among the companies of several corps. The simplification of a manœuvre so evidently complicate, was evidently desirable, and the diligence which it awakened, was rewarded by the happy discovery of operating, whatever may be the front acted upon, invariably on a fixed and same file in all the divisions. In the British system, the eighth is so nominated, and as that file must complete the quarter circle in eight paces, and, therefore, perform its half, the eighth of the circumference in four, the sixteenth in two, and the thirty-second in one pace (*fig. 195*),<sup>18</sup> the ordered number of steps, by being invariably taken from it, must always produce the same results and obliquity; nor can the strength of the division have any influence, since, whatever may be the number of files, those above that appointed to regulate must all comply and dress in the alignement, in which it takes post. To illustrate this operation, we will suppose a battalion (*fig. 194*) to be converted into an oblique echelon, and the movement to be by companies and to the right; on the caution *the division will wheel*, for instance, *four paces to the right*, the covering-serjeants c move out, and place themselves before the eighth files, the pivot-men included, from the named flank (here the right) of their respective divisions, to take each four wheeling paces, of 33 inches, on the circumference of the

<sup>18</sup> See vol. i. chap. v. § 12, note 43.

circle, of which his own flank man is the centre, and of which his eighth file will be the wheeling man; after performing those eight paces, those serjeants halt, when the pivot files immediately face, so as to place themselves in line with them and so that the continuation of the position in which each stands, runs close along his serjeant's rear. The platoon officers, as the movement is to the right, remain in their stations on the right, but face their men, to see their pivots properly situated; the advanced serjeants c are now to be in a line, if they be not so, it is a certain proof that they have not been exact in their advance, and they must accordingly undergo the necessary correction before the divisions are wheeled up; this dressing of the serjeants is performed by a field or mounted officer from the right, here the directing flank; thus prepared, on the command *quick-march*, the divisions wheel up until the eighth files close upon the serjeants, when the platoon officers give the words *halt-dress*, and after placing their men in the true alignment, conclusively delivering the commands *eyes-front*, take post on the pivots, while their serjeants c c c quit their advanced stations, to remove to their respective outward flanks (here the left,) in line with their front ranks, which positions, are the situations affixed to them, whenever the portions of the line thrown in the oblique echelon amounts to the company. It is now to be observed, that, was any file but the eighth, to approach the advanced serjeant, that serjeant must have swerved from

the course he ought to have pursued, and from this mistake, the particular body, whose line of direction he points out, must be more or less incorrectly placed, according as this eighth file is, by the wheel, more or less withdrawn from the advanced non-commissioned officer. When this is performed to the left (*fig. 194.B*), it is executed in the like manner, the serjeants place themselves before the eighth files from the left, and, at the lengthened pace of 33 inches described, the desired part of the periphery, platoon officers shift to the left to place their pivot men, and from it successively pronounce the commands *halt—dress* and *eyes-front*, at which latter they take post on the left, while their serjeants remove to the right, now the outward flank.

When those echellons occur to the rear, besides the difference the motion naturally presents of a right or left performance, they admit of the two-fold instance of the operating line wheeling forwards, after facing about, or, of the fractional parts, performed by wheeling back previous to their effecting their change of front to the rear, as, by the first of these the oblique situation is obtained by the divisions circling to the front, it offers no variety from the manner explained, except in the reverse situation of ranks, and of which, the rear, instead of the first, is brought a-head and leads the curve; by the second method, as the wheel precedes the facing about, and must therefore take place backwards instead of forwards, as it did

before, although the principle remains the same, this dissimilar feature offers a slight variety in the execution. In the present instance, therefore, on the cautionary command,<sup>19</sup> the covering-serjeants c place themselves with their backs behind the eighth files from either the right or left (that of the two flanks named to act as pivots) and after stepping over the ordered circumference, at a pace of 33 inches, they, on completing the number of steps signified, face about; the retired serjeants, as where it happens to the front, must now be in a line; the pivot-men all face inwards, and towards their divisions to offer, as before, points for the front ranks to dress by, when halted in the new position.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> The cautions and commands are here, when to the front, *companies* (or subdivisions, &c.) *will wheel four* (or any number of) *paces to the right* (or left) *in echelon—quick-march*, delivered by the chief, and *halt—dress* and *eyes—front*, delivered by the platoon leaders; and if to the rear, *companies* (or subdivisions, &c.) *will wheel four* (or any number of) *paces backward on their right* (or left) *into echelon, quick-march*, by the battalion chief—*halt*—caution of the covering-serjeants, and *halt—dress, eyes—front*, by the platoon leaders.

<sup>20</sup> This line of pivots must here be somewhat advanced of the line of serjeants, for, as the movement is to the rear, it is no longer the man of the front, but the one of the rear rank of the eighth file, who, at the conclusion of the wheel, is to touch the posted non-commissioned officer; sufficient room must accordingly be provided for the depth of the division. This formal manner of throwing divisions into echelon, by the placing of the serjeants to the front or to the rear of the eighth files, is, by the F. E. and E. restricted, where the battalion operates by companies, but if on a smaller front, the advance of a shoulder is viewed as sufficient to obtain the oblique position,

The platoon officers from the inward flanks (having removed thither when the wheels are on the left), in permitting their divisions to step back, on the command *quick-march*, delivered by the battalion chief, await to hear their serjeants give, in a moderate tone of voice, the caution *halt* (which those latter utter as the men approach them), to pronounce immediately themselves, the command *halt—dress*, and following it by *eyes—front*, they take each his station on the inward flank of his company, while his serjeant, who relinquishes his retired situation as a marker, assumes the echelon position on the outward flank. When the divisions are thus brought in the oblique direction, they are faced about, which completes the intention: of those two ways of accomplishing the same object, the first seems easier, from the circular march which is confined in it to the front, while the second presents the advantage of reducing the time that troops stand faced to the rear to its shortest duration, which might be of some moment in the presence of an antagonist.

which is shorter and evidently preferable (part iii. § 78. No. 20); and indeed, whenever the inclined direction is not to be kept up for any time, the more regular formation may generally be dispensed with, and the mere application of the shoulders forward, suffice to gain the echelon situation, for all changes in the position, conversions from column into line, line into square, and for reductions of the latter: on those occasions, the quick cadence has likewise been advantageously made to supersede the use of the slow time (part iii. § 114), formerly applied to the echelon march.

Thus concluding what belongs to the formation, when gained from the extended position, we shall, in reverting to the same evolution as performed from the open column, immediately, from its intention chiefly confined to the recovery of the line, feel the necessity for its occasionally admitting of a performance on a front, a rear, as well as on a central division. When on the front division, the wheels are executed by the companies backwards on their reverse flanks; when on the rear division, except that rear division formed upon, the others face about, to wheel afterwards backwards on the pivot side; and if a central company be selected for operation, the movement partakes of both the above evolutions, and the divisions, as they are situated before or behind that acted upon, conform to what has been described for a front or rear execution.

The manner in which the line is, in any of those cases taken up, will be described hereafter; therefore, to avoid repetition, we shall confine our explanations to the operation which immediately converts the column into the oblique echelon; yet, as this, in the present instance, whatever may be the division selected for execution or the evolution required, confines the wheel to a rear performance, and takes place, therefore, as where in line it is resulting from wheeling back, it will be divested of new information. The serjeants again step in rear of the eighth files, to trace out the desired portion of the circumference; the officers remove to the inward flanks, if not already there, the pivots



face, the men step back at the command *quick—march*, the serjeants apprise by the caution *halt*, when the wheels are to cease, and the platoon leaders deliver, loudly, on hearing it, the words *halt—dress*, which they follow by the command *eyes—front*; they take post, and their covering-serjeants gain their positions on the outward flanks; but even amidst such a sameness a difference still recurs, which is not of a nature to facilitate the performance, nor to insure its precision; for, as the divisions, when converted into echellon, are placed in each other's rear, instead of on each other's side, the check the line of serjeants provides for, previous to the taking up of the new ground, when in line, is now in column entirely lost.

In thus unfolding how this principle respecting the eighth file, is put in action, it will be reasonably expected that we should account for the reason which has led to its selection and the just preference it has received: this is readily explained, in its being the lowest number which, abstractly taken, provides, by its division and aliquot parts, for the various inclinations the tactical positions chiefly require, namely, the quarter, the eighth, the sixteenth, the thirty-second, and the three sixteenths of the circle, which the complete number, eight, and its parts, four, two, one, and six paces, answer for; as these, with a small alteration, derived by the advance or the drawing back of a shoulder, suffice to place as well as to conduct a battalion in any direction desired; this eighth file has, with

great propriety, therefore, been fixed upon, particularly as, except it, none under twelve, admits of a repetition of the same advantages ; and, that although the latter equally secures the like favourable results, the choice of the former is justified, from the confined application to division of at least 12 files, to which it would have reduced its reference : from this, the inconvenience of any number above 12, which would have offered still less general use, will be readily admitted. We have already remarked, that where the portion of the circle traced out, amounts to the eighth of the circumference, the obliquity obtained by it will place the troops so as to gain, on the march, as much ground to a flank as to the front (*A C fig. 195*) ; and that, by describing a greater or a less arch, the position will approach nearer, or diverge more from the perpendicular ; but whatever may be the curve performed, the echellons are always brought to face their lines of march, so that, in stepping straight forwards, they may gain their destinations.

The mode in which those oblique echellons are taken up, will immediately suggest the means for their relinquishment, for as the mere wheeling of a few paces to the front, or to the rear, is adequate to establish that formation, and the inward flanks, which act as pivots, are kept throughout in the original line they stood before, and preserve their relative positions, the mere application of the contrary movement, and the wheeling of a few paces back or forwards, by removing every individual into

his former situation must replace the body as it stood antecedently, either in line or column; when formed from line, the original position is thus recovered, the new alignement although parallel to the old line, will, after motion, be removed towards a flank of the ground occupied before. Besides this immediate formation, resulting from the echelons wheeling forwards or backwards, into the direction preserved by the inward pivots (*fig. 207*), a new alignement may be likewise gained on any division, by its being first situated, and the remainder, as they follow one another, moving up or back to it. When a line is thus formed, it is an invariable rule for the regulating division to be previously placed; and for the others, after it is properly fixed, to be wheeled so as to stand under half the angle under which the directing body has been brought to gain its station in the new alignement. This, by placing their inward flanks on the diagonals they are to pursue,<sup>21</sup> facilitates the movement, as it enables those divisions to march straight forward into their positions in the general line (*fig. 212, 213*).

<sup>21</sup> As by the quarter of the circle, a body is placed in the perpendicular situation to that in which it stood before, the old position *a d* (*fig. 211*). and that taken up *a b*, must become the two sides of a parallelogram *a, b, c, d*, and the circular which places the next division (*e d*), under half the right angle (four paces), by removing that body over the arch of 45 degrees, must obviously situate its pivot on the diagonal *d b*, of the same parallelogram, and thus enable it to step as much to the front as to the side, which as *d a* is equal to *a b*, is here required; a view of the figure will show, that by performing the like wheel the same advantage is also repeated for the divisions on the left, whose pivots are, by it, each brought to march

Although the oblique echellon admits of a performance on any front, that of division, or subdivision, appears the most suitable, particularly where applied to the changes of position. Where a considerable line is, during progress, to gain ground to a flank, it may likewise break by companies; the difficulty of moving an extensive body, thus subdivided into small parts, does not, however, recommend the measure, which, besides, when attempted on so large a scale, betrays the defect of placing troops under the enfilade.

Hence a line of infantry, when it is to move in an oblique direction, will more frequently offer the succession of stronger bodies, consisting each of one, two, or more battalions. When this is designed, the inward company or platoon will first, by the assistance of its serjeant, who takes the required paces to the front or to the rear of the eighth file, be removed into the desired oblique in the manner before described; and so soon as that division is properly situated, the remainder of the same battalion, or all those of the battalions intended to constitute the same echellon, will form next to it by first wheeling under half its arch, and then marching up or along the diagonal of the parallelogram formed on the line from its inward flank to the pivot flank *a*; thus the eighth company moves along *h f*, the diagonal of the parallelogram, *a, f, g, h*.

This likewise explains why, in the changes of position of a line, the division of direction is first situated, and the others are then wheeled half the number of paces to that formed upon, as, this by placing those latter under half the arch of the first, must lead them straight forward to their new positions, which no other inclination could effectually accomplish.

back into its alignment, in which they dress. This, which is performed by every echelon, and by the whole of them at the same time, completes the general formation (*fig. 203*).

It is to be noticed that, by this movement, the inward files of the following echellons are doubled by the outward files of those in their immediate front ; and as the number so covered increases in proportion as the arch traced out has been more considerable, not only is a loss of men sustained by it but a reduced line offered. To provide against those inconveniences, the late Rules and Regulations propose two expedients, namely, either for the rear echellons, after formation, to disengage by gaining ground by the flank march, or to guard against it by an increased interval, previously separating the battalions meant to be thrown asunder by the movement, and as, while in motion, the clearing of the files thus masked, could not be well attempted by the oblique step, where time allows, the latter measure appears preferable.<sup>23</sup> It is true that, by

<sup>23</sup> The F. E. and E. part v. § 141, No. 4, gives a very excellent method to recover the line, whenever this doubling of the inward files of echellons in rear has not been provided for previous to formation, or corrected while on the march; it consists in those rear echellons moving to their respective adjutants posted on the general line (*fig. 202*), by the oblique echelon march of companies to the reverse flank. In the French Reglement, this doubling of the flanks of rear echellons, when converting into considerable obliques, is not attended to, and the omission explained in the facility there is in recovering the line, by various evolutions, without it, and notwithstanding the inward files are so masked (F. R. *évolutions de ligne*, No. 519—533).

this alteration the oblique will be converted into a direct echellon ; but where the front is thus extended as the principal feature of the oblique, that of presenting constant readiness of formation by wheeling back into line, is lost, the body may safely gain a shape which, from the movement thus changing its intention, becomes more congenial to its present character.

*March of the oblique Echellon,*

*First,* Two objects a b (*fig. 194*), are to be procured at first, and constantly to be kept up, afterwards, to guide the advance of the leading platoon officer.

*Second,* Officers, in conducting their divisions, are to preserve the parallelism and distance with those immediately preceding, and, therefore, to follow each on the march the file of the division in front, the rear of which he has been brought by the circular motion, which placed him into echellon, and constantly to keep his original relative situation with it ; to insure still greater exactness, those leaders are likewise, occasionally to glance their eyes to the directing flank, to satisfy themselves that the line, they must form all together, is preserved ; were they, in this respect, to discover mistakes among the platoon officers nearer to the directing flank, they are not to follow up the fault, but, without destroying general harmony, to check the error and obviate its propagation.

*Third,* This movement, by favouring an inclination towards a flank, will seldom demand the collateral aid of the pace, or position which promotes the oblique march, as its execution will, besides, while so separated, become precarious, from the difficulty it presents to preserve union and the relative position, the progress, under the oblique echelon, will chiefly be confined to the direct march.

*Fourth,* Mounted officers, in superintending this movement, are, amongst the several directions incumbent on them, to see the two inward officers marching in the true line, *y z* (*fig. 194*), and thus, by establishing a base, readily determine the position of the remaining leaders. They are also carefully to observe, that the outward flanks be not thrown to the front, which might, and probably would place the troops under the enfilade.

*Fifth,* Impediments on the march are to be obviated by the obstructed files of echellons, or by the echellons themselves that encounter the obstacle falling back. This is to be performed without any improper interference with the neighbouring divisions.

*Sixth,* On the fractional parts of the battalion assuming the oblique echelon position, the colours division wheels by itself, and operates separately.

*Seventh,* Whenever the echellons amount to the company, the platoon commander takes post on the inward flank, and his serjeant on the outward; the officer is, therefore, on the right, when the movement is to the right, and on the left, when to

the left: but when the battalion breaks into subdivisions, the captain is on the inward flank of the right subdivision, and his covering serjeant, or a subaltern, on the inward flank of the left one; both on the right when the motion is to the right, and on the left when the movement is to the left.

*Eighth*, Those oblique, like the direct echellons, are susceptible of alteration in the leading body, however, as they do not admit of the central formation, those changes are here confined to the calling of the rear division to the front; when so, the echellons are previously halted, and the last one, after throwing the necessary number of files to the rear, to facilitate the advance, steps forwards to move along. The others, in turn, as those to be a-head have passed, follow till that formerly in front takes up the march, which completes the operation.

*Ninth*, The principles above enumerated relate to the oblique echellon, where the successive bodies are of the front of half a battalion or under it: for if above that strength, as the formation into line by wheeling back into the oblique line *yz*, (*fig.* 194). kept up by the inward officers, is no longer practicable nor required, it should as mentioned before, invariably convert into the direct echellon, and in assuming the form submit to the rules delivered for the movement, the shape of which it has then adopted.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> In the formation of those obliques from line, the French practice differs somewhat from the British as, instead of determin-



## SECTION IV.

*Third Kind of Echellon applied to the inclined March.*

Another mode of constructing those oblique echellons, which differs from the preceding in the preparatory aid of the thrown out serjeants, which is dispensed with, consists in the fractional parts of the line, intended to operate by, wheeling up as many paces as the number of ranks the

ing the position of the inward flank platoon by means of the advanced or retired serjeant in front, or in rear of the eighth file; the obliquity by the French is ascertained through the medium of the adjutant-major (*fig. 206*). The commandant, in the first instance, fixes on a distant object in the line he intends to place the leading echellon, and the *adjutant-major* of the flank battalion then takes 50 paces from the pivot (the right if the change is to the right, and left, if to the left), along his corps, and halting and fronting when he has performed them, moves straight forward until he covers the distant point, when he is arrested by the chief commander. The flank platoon (the extreme right one if the movement be to the right, and left if to the left), is then wheeled up in the alignment displayed by the said adjutant, and the remaining platoons belonging to that first echellon are put on the march, and successively, as they arrive, dressed on that first situated. This is repeated by the following echellons, whose inclined situations are likewise obtained through their flank battalion adjutant-majors who, made acquainted with the number of paces the adjutant-major of the leading echellon has taken, to gain the desired inclination, in repeating the operation determine the parallel lines for their own, by taking the same advance

body is formed upon ; three if three, and two if two deep, merely in order to disengage their rear rank. This might, of course, be executed while on the march as well as while halted.

When it is performed while halted, and the intention is signified to wheel two or three paces by divisions, subdivisions, or sections, the pivot-men, at the caution, face into the new position, and at the word *march* the portions of the line directed to break by, wheel up the ordered number, in completing the last step, they receive from their officers, the command *halt—dress*. The colours' division, as in the regular oblique, executes by itself.

When this is performed by subdivisions, the commander, whether it be the leading or the rear one, invariably remains attached to the right subdivision, and his covering serjeant, or a subaltern, takes charge of that on the left ; where the line is broken into sections, the same principle is acted upon, and whether the right or left be a-head the platoon leader takes post with the first or right section ; his serjeant, or a subaltern, with the second

to the front after taking 50 paces along their battalions. The inward battalion of the leading echellon, as it regulates in this instance the whole, is, as in the direct echellon, provided with two *jalonneurs* (markers) ; and as the aid afforded by the individual who follows the inward flank of that preceding (*a fig. 201*) is now lost, a non-commissioned officer (*un serre file*), of the inward platoon in all succeeding echellons, is detached to step in rear of the centro file (*file du drapeau*) of the next, and inward battalion of that preceding.

(both on the inward flank) ; and officers, or non-commissioned officers, from the supernumerary rank, take charge, in the like manner, of the third and fourth. By this means, the platoon chiefs lead their companies when the movement is to the right, but they follow and march in rear when it is to the left (*fig.* 204, 205).

Very little difference arises when those echellons are taken up while on the march ; when so, as the intention is made known for the line to break, and wheel two or three paces by companies, subdivisions, or sections, to the right or to the left, the inward men, who act as pivots, mark the time, and turn somewhat round, while the others, on the principle of the wheel, glance the eyes to their outward files to step immediately over the circumference, for two or three paces, performing again the third or fourth to the front, at the word *forwards*, delivered at the time by their platoon leaders ; officers and non-commissioned officers take post as already described where it happens from the halt. Should the line be re-formed, and the troops not be in motion, on the caution *wheel back into line*, the pivots face inwards into the alignement, into which the rest of the men, at the command *march*, circle back by taking two or three paces, while the officers and serjeants, in charge of echellons, repair to the respective stations allotted to them at original formation. The men are fixed in the line by their respective captains, who deliver the word *halt—dress* for the entire of their companies : when this

is to take place on the march, on the hearing of the injunction *wheel back' into line*, the pivots mark-time and turn into the original front, while the echellons step two or three paces to the rear to regain the line position, which acquired, they perform the third or fourth pace to the front on the word *forwards*, here also delivered, but by the battalion commander.

Although this evolution admits of a performance by divisions, from the trifling obliquity it provides for, to the front of subdivisions, or sections, as favouring a greater inclination, it will be more constantly referred.<sup>34</sup>

The latter description of echelon was first practised by a Prussian general, as a substitute to the oblique march : from the slight separation between the following parts, so situated that the front rank of a succeeding section moves close up to the rear rank of that preceding, it must be allowed, that the hazardous application of the inclined step is by it removed, without falling under inconveniences that attend the performance of the regular echelon, since both the preserving of the relative positions and of distances are, in it, considerably facilitated, from the proximity in which the following fractional parts are placed ; and

<sup>34</sup> A subdivision of nine files, by wheeling three paces, is brought on an angle of 30 degrees, but if two deep, as it wheels only two paces, it will be merely removed under an angle of 20 degrees from its former position. A section of five files, in wheeling up three paces, forms an angle of about 35 degrees.

while the march is thus facilitated, the recovery of the line is likewise more readily obtained; yet those advantages, as well as the reduced objects it presents to the enfilade, and which is also to be adduced in its behalf, are counterbalanced by serious defects, for, where performed by a numerous body of troops, it will be found no trifling matter to operate in so many parts, and to preserve the necessary regularity and union amongst them; besides, as, by the removal of the perplexing pace, in which the obliques were heretofore performed, and the introduction of the half face in its stead, the difficulty hitherto experienced, when relinquishing the perpendicular direction, has been greatly diminished, the inclined echelon, and particularly that last described,<sup>25</sup> has lost much of its utility, at least so far as it was designed to supply a movement, which in the progress of improvement, is become easier than the proposed substitutes to replace it; and as the diagonal march, by general adoption, rises in estimation, so much the oblique echelon sink in practice.

<sup>25</sup> The directions respecting those latter kind of obliques, as they were first issued, may be seen in *Neue Milit. Briefe Breslau*, 1730, *erster band*, § 102, and are also inserted in the 3rd vol. of *Scharnhorst's Handbuch für officiere* § 20. It appears by them that the sections wheeled only two paces though three deep, and that the inward file of the section in rear was ordered to follow the outward file of that in front.

## SECTION V.

*Formation of the Line from Echellon.*<sup>25</sup>

The recovery of the line from echellon, evidently belonging to the formation of that primitive position, its explanation ought apparently to have been removed where, amongst the other movements of a similar description, the converting into line is subjected to disquisition; yet the advantages resulting from having all that relates to those half formations unfolded at once, has induced me to pursue a different course for the echellon and the file movements; nor can the deviation meet with any inconvenience, since, if this elucidation be deemed premature, at the subsequent period where it is viewed as more appropriate, reference may be had to what has been here previously delivered.

It is a truth fully admitted, that a happy classification is much calculated to facilitate the knowledge of a science, since, while it smoothly leads to information, it secures the retention of what is acquired, by the natural concatenation as well as gradual connexion it establishes amongst the different parts which constitute the whole. It is the straight road, which, while it is the shortest, is the easiest

<sup>25</sup> R. and R. part ii. § 63; part iii. § 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165; part iv. § 195, 197, 199.

retraced : but by a proper classification must be understood, that division and arrangement, which, by facilitating instruction, is likely to assist conception as well as to improve memory ; for all that is of a nature to clog and perplex, notwithstanding any countenance it may derive from the plea of consistency, must be rejected. A strict adherence to rules is highly recommendable, nay, absolutely requisite, but reason must discern the few cases where their applications would fail, and where detrimental they would counteract intention, for, as they are the work of man, and as such, partake of his imperfection, they must pay the slight tribute of occasional exception, to betray the fallibility of their origin. To establish principles never to be departed from, is seldom prudent and frequently injurious ; but, leaving a digression, unguardedly commenced and in which we have already too long indulged, in reverting to our subject, we shall premise what relates to the formation of the line from echellon, by enumerating the distinct evolutions it admits, and in the order they appear then prosecute their explanations.

Accordingly we shall discover, that from the direct echellon, the line may be retrieved, 1st, by the divisions in rear which come up to the alignment of that in front, and form in the prolongation of its position a y (*fig. 189*) ; 2nd, by the wheeling back of the divisions into the oblique line a z (*fig. 189*) kept up by the inward flanks ; and 3rd, by the leading echellon which is first removed into an

inclined direction, and by the remaining, that are then advanced to dress up to it; and that from the oblique echellon, the line may be recovered, 1st, by the wheeling back of the divisions into the alignement kept up by their inward flank-men (*fig. 207*); 2nd, by the divisions in rear, which move up, and successively form on that a-head (*fig. 212, 213*). The latter formation exhibits again the differences of the leading division, either preserving its original inclination and merely halting, or of its wheeling up or back, so as to gain such advanced or retired situation as the new alignement renders desirable.<sup>27</sup> From the column, by the application of the echellon movements, a line may also be presented and formed on any of its divisions, by its being first situated, and the remaining, which are advanced, or brought back, to dress in its alignement (*fig. 216*).

Should the first of these now be designed, and the direct echellon be required to form on that a-head into a parallel line to that relinquished (*fig. 189*), the head division is halted, properly situated, and

<sup>27</sup> A very excellent method of taking up a parallel alignement to the one quitted, from the oblique echellon of a considerable line, is presented in the Field Exercise and Evolutions, as revised by Major-general Torrens (part v. § 141, No. 3). The formation into line is effected on the contrary flank (*b, fig. 203*) to the one (*a*), the brigades, battalions, &c. were first thrown into echellon; the right, if the formation into echellon has been originally to the left; the left, if the conversion into echellon has been originally to the right.



a distant point of correction *y* fixed upon, while the other divisions move on, until they gain the alignment, where, in turn, as they arrive, they are situated by their inward leaders, who, quitting the flank, on approach to take post before the three outward files of the portion of the line already formed, halt their men, and effect their corrections from those three inward files, as point of *appui*, on the distant point *y*, which they take particular care to leave free, so as not to throw the outward flanks to the front, which might expose to the enemy's enfilade.<sup>28</sup>

Were it required to wheel the divisions back into the line *a z* (*fig. 189*) displayed by their inward flanks, a cessation in the march precedes the manœuvre which consists afterwards in circling

<sup>28</sup> The caution and the commands are here, *echellons' form line en the head company* (battalion or any division)—*leading echelon—halt*, both delivered by the chief, and as every rear division comes up, it is placed by the words of its inward officer, *halt—dress, eyes—front*. The officers should in this manœuvre, be most rapid in situating their men, that no delay be experienced for want of point of *appui*, when the following division comes up.

What is here explained merely refers to the movements of one or two battalions, to the utmost, which operate by companies, or grand divisions, for where the movement is extended to the line, as the echellons much exceed the latter front, and amount each to a wing, a corps, or even several of them, they must be halted before, and when still at a few paces behind the line of formation into which they are then successively brought by grand divisions, or by the application of any of the methods previously mentioned, for the situating and the dressing of a considerable body of infantry in an alignment.

the divisions to the rear into the *alignement* intended; however, if so, the *echellons* must have been antecedently prepared for this formation; as, how trifling soever may be the advance, and distance left between them, the oblique *a c* (*fig. 193*) will always be too considerable to contain the division. When this *alignement* is, therefore to be taken up, the *echellons* are halted, and a distant point beyond the directing flank ascertained to establish the new line, in which the covering serjeants are to take post, so as to leave between them each the proper distance for his division (*fig. 208*). Thus prepared, the companies gain their relative positions, by moving close up to their non-commissioned officers, and effect this either by the oblique, or by facing and the application of the flank march. The *echellons* are now in readiness to form, and may immediately present a line, or postpone it, and advance, to fulfil that intention whenever desired.<sup>19</sup>

When an oblique to the front is the *alignement* required (*fig. 209*), the head *echellon* is halted and wheeled up in the designed direction, while the others, which keep in motion, receive as each draws near its position, the word *halt—dress up* from its officers to take post. Were the *echellons* consi-

<sup>19</sup> The *echellons*, after being properly situated, will merely demand the command, *halt*, if on the march, and for formation, *wheel back into line, quick march*, from the battalion chiefs; and *halt—dress, eyes—front* from the captains, who are to step a pace to the front at the caution.

derable, and amounting to half a battalion, or upwards, this immediate facility of dressing on the line would cease, and give way to a more complicated and protracted operation; for the inward flank division of the leading body (*fig. 210*) would then, on the principle already deduced for the oblique echellon, in the first instance, have to circle alone into the new direction, and the remaining divisions, which compose the same echellon after it is placed, have to gain the relative position under half the angle, before they move up to join the line in which they are in turn situated at the words *halt—dress up*, delivered by their respective officers. This troublesome process must be reiterated for the following echellons, which, as each draws near the alignement, would be obliged to halt, and to form successively, by platoons, on the flank one, which is previously stationed.

In this manœuvre, and formation of the line into an oblique alignement besides the precaution before recommended, against throwing the outward flank to the front, additional attention becomes incumbent to provide against the natural tendency it betrays of increasing the original intervals, established betwixt the corps, particularly between those thrown asunder, by moving in a different echellon. To this a timely inclination towards the operating flank, then the sides on which the extension arises, might suffice, but should not be neglected, since otherwise, from the direct march's being so suddenly relinquished, by taking up an inclined

disposition the formation would suffer; and although a few paces might and would be here immaterial, the repetition by spreading the troops on a more extended surface than they are to occupy, must tend to weaken the line.

We have already noticed the oblique echelon, like the direct, to be convertible into line, either by the wheeling back of the divisions into the alignement, retained by their inward flanks, or by the divisions moving up or back to one named amongst them. By the first method, on the caution *wheel back into line*, which announces the intention, the pivots take the necessary position by facing, while the officers resume that required to overlook the circular motion, which commences at the word *quick—march* delivered by the battalion commander, and concludes by the word *halt—dress* uttered by the platoon chiefs, who afterwards, rapidly correcting any error in dress, give the command *eyes—front*, and regain, if not already there, their posts in line, on the right of their platoons.

But if the second method be resorted to, and the formation is on the head echelon, that head echelon is first correctly situated, by being wheeled to that effect, either up or back, as the new alignement requires; the others are then, in conformity to the principle already elucidated,<sup>30</sup> placed under

<sup>30</sup> Had the divisions, therefore, wheeled at first half the number of paces in echelon it would require to place them to front the new position, (A B fig. 213); the head one will, on arrival, have

half the angle of that posted, marched forwards and brought up by their officers, who, each as his division approaches the line, leaves his flank to take his station in front of the third file of the preceding company (that last formed), and thence delivers the command, *halt—dress up*, as he sees his inward flank just in the act of joining the line; he then corrects his men from that third file of the preceding division, as point of *appui* on the distant marker, *z* (*fig. 212*), and conclusively, giving the word *eyes—front*, takes his appropriate station in line, on the right of his company.

to complete its arch, by performing as many paces as it took before, and the others, as they are already posted in their relative situations, under half the angle, will only have to move up and form.

But should the proportion of the circumference, the head division had additionally described, exceed that first traced out, those in rear would have to wheel up half the number of paces of those thus taken over and above by that first situated. They would have to wheel back, were it less; therefore, to give an example, had the whole been brought in echelon of two paces to the right, and the leading body had been obliged, on arrival, to wheel four paces more to take up its station in the alignement, the others would receive the injunction to perform all one pace, and thus be brought under the arch of three paces, the half of six, the number performed by the head division, which they are here supposed to perform upon. But had that head division, without wheeling either forwards or backwards, arrived straight on the line, and stepped forward into its position, under the obliquity, on which it proceeded while on the march, those in rear would have always to wheel back one pace, and in conformity with this theory, have to manœuvre so as to be placed for ultimate formation under half the angle of that taken up by the division they are to form upon.

It is to be remarked, that the relative situation under half the angle directed for the rear divisions, in the formation under the oblique echelon, produces here the two-fold advantage of placing them on the diagonal, so as to gain their ground by the straight march, as well as to disentangle their inward files which, covered before, would, if preserved in their doubled position, somewhat perplex the evolution.<sup>21</sup>

This formation from echelon is of constant reference to all changes in the position of a line,

<sup>21</sup> After the echellons have been halted, a distant point fixed upon, and the regulating division has been posted, the caution is delivered, *the echellons will form line on (any) division*, and the remaining are placed in their respective positions, under half the angle, the necessary command *to wheel*, being given, to that effect, by the battalion chief, followed by *quick—march*, also delivered by him, and *halt—dress, eyes—front*, by the platoon leaders: when thus situated, the battalion chief gives the words *march* or *quick—march*, to move them up, and as the inward flank of every division touches the part of the line already formed, the inner officer, who has quitted his flank to take post before the third file of the last entered platoon, gives the words *halt—dress up, eyes—front*, and takes post. Had the movement been to the rear, the battalion chief, after situating the divisions in their relative positions under half the angle, utters the commands *right about—face, quick—march*, and the platoon leaders, each as his inward flank joins the line, *halt—front dress back*, when he places his men from the third file of the portion already on the alignment as point of *appui*, to the distant object, which accomplished, he gives the direction, *eyes—front*, and takes his station on the right.

The additional direction of *right* or *left shoulders forwards* formerly used, and still inserted in the late editions of the Rules and Regulations, had been properly exploded by subsequent orders

since by the placing, merely, of a division in a desired direction, and wheeling the others half the portion of the circumference the regulating one described, they may readily be brought up or back to it, and the line be thrown into any situation; nor would the measure be thwarted, were the ground removed, and the new position distant; as the whole, by being first thrown into the inclined echelon, may thus march to the spot desired to be occupied, and, on gaining it, the head division first take post, and those in rear, after assuming the half, and relative position, move up, and by dressing in succession on it, complete the formation.<sup>22</sup>

as, by the rapid succession of unnecessary words of command, it is of a nature to create unsteadiness in the execution.

When several battalions thus operate, the inward division in each of them is always first posted by the battalion commander, before the others are brought up; he, therefore, on formation, rides on the inward flank, and as his corps joins the line, he wheels his leading division into the alignement displayed by the distant object, as well as his adjutant, who marks the opposite flank of the battalion (Major Palmer's *Detail of the Line Movements Observations*, 14th, 15th, and 16th movements); the remaining echellons are then brought up in turn, as explained. Major Cunningham here explains the adjutant, as marking the inward flank (*Tactick of the British army*, 5th manœuvre); but this, which is now, was not then consistent with our system, and can only apply where (as it is the case at present) the successive covering of the serjeants, after the manner of the French, is adopted.

<sup>22</sup> When the formation is to a distant position, the divisions wheel half the number of paces required, to place them in a parallel line to it; this, by removing them on the diagonal, will enable them to proceed straight forwards, and by the perpendicular march, to their

When this takes place to the front, and on a flank division, the mode of execution will easily be deduced from what has already been said, but where on a flank division the alignement is retired, or where the motion is regulated by a central part of the line, as the process may not so immediately strike, some further illustration seems desirable ; were the position, therefore, a retired one, and the alteration effected on a flank division, that flank division is previously wheeled back into the new alignement, and the remaining divisions are then either faced about and wheeled forwards, or first wheeled back and then faced about, but always so removed as to stand under half the inclination of that directing, and with their rear ranks in front, facing to their former rear ; thus reversed, they are made to proceed to their respective situations on the

places of destination. It may be further remarked, that in all changes in the positions of the line, it is under this inclination, that all the divisions, except those belonging to the regulating battalion, (which, posted on the point of intersection, act on a fixed pivot), are brought first to move to their ground, where, on arrival, they by corps, perform as explained on their inward flank divisions. Had the original wheel in echelon, therefore, been of three paces, and the directing flank, on reaching the line, have had three paces more to perform, to take up its proper situation, as those in rear are already under half the angle, they would, preserving the obliquity they had while on the march, merely move up and form ; but, had the head one, on joining the alignement, been compelled to wheel more or less than those three paces, or, to wheel back, those in rear would be obliged to manœuvre, so as to gain their relative positions under half the arch, before they march up for formation.



line, in which they are fixed in a manner not widely different from that described. The officer, as before, leaves the flank as his division draws near, to gain his station opposite the third file of the outward flank of that preceding, and just formed, and thence gives the words *halt—front', dress—back'*; when he observes his inward flank-man touch the line, he then, as before, performs the necessary correction, delivers the final command *eyes—front*, and takes post on the right.

This movement, thus not unlike its corresponding operation to the front, is yet more intricate in its performance, from the dressing in it taking place to the rear, instead of to the front, and no trifling degree of activity indeed becomes desirable in the officers promptly to place their men so that the next division, in coming up, may not be disappointed in the point of *appui*, which the three outward files of the last posted are to afford; as no inconsiderable inconvenience would result from this partial delay, if repeated, and the rear divisions would join, while those preceding are still unprepared for reception. It is almost superfluous to add, that a distant ground to the rear might be equally so occupied, if the divisions, after they are brought under the necessary angle of march, are faced about, and in the reverse oblique echellon, the rear rank in front, made to march to the destined retired position, where, on arrival, after the head is situated, and the other divisions are reduced under half the arch, the alignment is taken up as de-

scribed in rotation, and by every division immediately resuming its front, as it gains its station in the new alignment.

It still now remains to explain the last case, where a central division is appointed to regulate. This, the following example will amply illustrate: supposing such a change to be effected on the fifth division (*fig. 214*), that division on its flank, or, perhaps better on its centre, is wheeled in the new line, while distant objects are provided, or markers thrown out to determine the alignment. That portion of the line, which by the movement is to retire (here the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th companies), is faced about; all the divisions, except that regulated and already placed, are then wheeled on their inward flanks, the one towards formation (here the present right), the very number of paces as that of direction,<sup>33</sup> which, as the latter performed on the centre, and they on the flank, situate them under half the arch of the first, and remove them on the diagonal, along which line, they step on the word *march*: as they reach the alignment, they are situated in it as before explained; those which

<sup>33</sup> When the change of position of a line is effected on a central division, it is to be observed, that although the wheels of those which are to be thrown back, are in a contrary direction to those which are to be advanced (*fig. 214*), that owing to the facing about of the former, the same word of command *to the present right wheel two, three, &c. paces*, or, *to the present left wheel two, three, &c. paces*, will suffice to remove the whole into the oblique required.

advanced into it as when it is performed to the front, and those which retire into it as when it takes place to the rear.

From the nature of the evolution itself, it will be readily inferred, that whenever those echellon movements are applied to the changes in the position of a considerable line, the execution on a fixed point can merely be understood for a single battalion, which, situated at the point of intersection, might, according to the part selected, effect it on a flank or central division, but all the others must, to gain their ground, evidently first take up the inclined echellon position, to remove to their stations in the general line, before they can attempt to operate (*fig. 215*).

In conclusion to what relates to those obliques, and their applications to the alterations in the position of a line, it is necessary to observe, that should during progress, the movement be interrupted, and a sudden attack, probably of cavalry, compel the part not formed, and still in motion, to seek protection under immediate formation, by either wheeling back or forwards into line; as the intention is evidently after firing and repulsing the assailant, to resume the relinquished disposition and to proceed on the march, officers and non-commissioned officers should not quit their flanks, and leave their echellon stations to take up those allotted to them under the extended position, but preserve them to be in readiness when required, and free in front, to wheel up again and recover

a formation which while threatened, had been merely abandoned for defence.<sup>24</sup>

The converting of troops into line, the principal, and in fact, the sole object which can ever call for the use of the oblique echelon while in column, admits of no other diversity in performance, but that offered from its taking place on a front, a rear, or a central division.

When it is the front division that is acted upon, it is first posted (*fig. 216*), and the others are wheeled back on the reverse flank, so as to stand half the number of paces to it; when so reduced, they are moved forwards to form, as directed for the evolution, where it occurs to the front. Should it be the rear division, by which it is directed to operate, that rear division is likewise previously wheeled into the new line; the others are faced about, and made to circle on the pivot flank, so as to gain the relative position with it under half the angle; they are then marched to the rear, and perform as described where a retired alignment is taken up (*fig. 217*).

And the evolution partakes of both those preceding, when the division, chosen to direct the forma-

<sup>24</sup> This was a favourite evolution of Frederick the Great, who, to try the skill of his troops, used frequently in his reviews, thus to interrupt the formation, or changes in the position, by three or four faint attacks of cavalry. Mauvillon asserts that it was performed without the manœuvre suffering from it, or any disorder becoming perceptible; *Appendice du septième livre de la monarchie Prussienne*, explanation, and plate 15, *fig. 18*.

tion, is one of those situated between the flanks (*fig. 218*). That so appointed, is accordingly wheeled on its centre, and placed as required, the divisions a-head of it are faced about, and as, by that means, they are all brought to face that which regulates, they are, by the same command,<sup>35</sup> wheeled the same number of paces back, on their inner flanks, that of the two, which is the first to gain the new line: the line is then entered as explained where a change in the position, under the extended formation, occurs on a central part, to which manœuvre the present bears every affinity: the divisions in echelon therefore step off on the word *march*, and are fixed in their new situations by their officers who, as they advance or retire into it, deliver the appropriate command *halt—dress up*, or *halt—front*, *dress back*, as it suits their divisions.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>35</sup> As in the central formation the division, nominated to regulate, wheels on its centre, and the others in taking up the position of march on the flanks, the latter take the same number of paces, as performed by that of direction, which, from the companies, consisting generally of the same number of files or thereabouts, will situate them under half the angle.

When a column is thus to convert into line on a central division, as those in front are first faced about, they are all again to wheel by the same word of command, notwithstanding the contrary sides to which they perform, and contrary flanks which act as pivots to the movement; since, although, those in front circle backwards on the pivot, and those in rear circle backwards on the reverse, flank, they still all execute on their present right or left (*fig. 218*).

<sup>36</sup> The cautions and commands, when forming into line from column, are, if on the head division, *the column will form line*, on the front division' by the echelon movement, the head division is

Were a considerable column thus to operate and convert into line (*fig. 219*), a single battalion amongst them can only manœuvre on the spot, but the others must first take up the inclined position, to march to their ground before they can

wheeled and situated as required, and the command delivered, *division (that of formation) stand fast remaining... paces on your right (or left) backwards wheel* and always the reverse flank *quick-march* by the chief of the battalion and *halt—dress, eyes-front* by the platoon leaders, then *quick-march* by the battalion chief and *halt—dress up* by the platoon leaders. If the evolution be to the rear, the divisions, except the last, which is properly situated to display the alignment, are faced about *right about—face*; they are then wheeled on the pivot flank, and marched to the rear, to gain their stations on the line, where they are fixed by the words *halt—front dress—back*, given by the platoon leaders, and followed as before, by the words *eyes—front*. Were the movement central, the caution is *form line by echelon, on No. 4*, (for instance), No. 4, is then wheeled on its centre, and No. 1, 2, and 3, receive the direction, *right about—face*, then is heard No. 4, *stand fast remaining... paces on your present right (or left) backwards wheel, quick-march* by the battalion chief and *halt—dress, eyes—front* by the platoon leaders, *march* again by the battalion chief, and as they join the alignment they receive from their platoon leaders the words *halt—dress up* or *halt—front dress back*, according as they advance or retire into their situations in the new line.

“If an oblique line is to be formed on a central division: the  
 “central company will wheel backwards into the new direction  
 “on its reverse flank, and the companies in its rear will wheel  
 “backwards on their respective reverse flanks, a number of paces in  
 “proportion as laid down in No. 1: but in order to bring the  
 “companies in front of the central company into lines of march  
 “parallel to each other, with their leading flanks perpendicular  
 “to the points of *appui* in the new line, and thereby to prevent  
 “crowding and false movement, it is necessary that the front compa-

form. No great inconvenience would result, should the line be desired to face to the contrary side, as a counter-march of divisions by files would, by changing the front, remove the difficulty, and by previously facing the whole to the former rear, render the movement, except in this particular of the counter-march, similar to that where it occurs on the original front.

As to those echellons which, without the help of the thrown out serjeants, are derived from the mere wheel of two or three paces, performed by the fractional parts of the battalion, they are naturally included here within the rules of the regular obliques, to which kind they properly appertain; their immediate utility, directed to favour an inclination on the march and deviation from the perpendicular course, will still point out the wheeling back in the line, kept up by their pivots, as the most frequent evolution under that disposition; were, however any other formation on the head, rear, or even central desired, the small front of subdivision, or section, in

“panies should *face about*, wheel into line to their proper reverse  
 “flanks, and *wheel forward* to their proper pivot flanks so many  
 “paces (keeping the rear rank in front) as, in addition to those  
 “wheeled by the rear companies, may complete the quarter circle;  
 “thus if the the rear companies have wheeled six paces, the front  
 “companies will wheel two; if five, three; if seven, one; and the  
 “whole will then form as laid down, § 117 and 118, F. E; and E.  
 part iii. § 120, No. 5. This mode of performing seems long, but it  
 is evidently more correct than the manner in which this movement  
 was executed before; from the true position in which it throws the  
 front divisions, I have little doubt but it will likewise be found to be  
 the shorter expedient (*fig.* 218 B).

which those echellons take place, will shorten the process, by removing the necessity for any previous arrangement, and allow the successive parts, without first withdrawing under the position of half the angle, to move up or back at once into the new alignment.<sup>37</sup>

## SECTION VI.

### *Various Applications of the Echellon Movements.*<sup>38</sup>

A brief summary of the various occasions, which call for the use of the echellon, will now conclude what relates to this movement, and by retracing at once and collecting together all belonging to it, confirm the knowledge already obtained by the preceding: commencing with the direct echellon we shall find,

*First*, That the advance of a considerable line may be facilitated by the battalions, of which it consists, gaining, while on the march, the echellon position, by following each other at about six paces distance (*fig. 220*), which, sufficient to disengage them and render their motion independant, will

<sup>37</sup> It is additionally to be observed that, where the inclined formation to the front or rear takes place by subdivisions, or sections, the captains must on the caution remove, if not already there, to the inner flank of their companies, and consequently shift to it when the left is a-head.

<sup>38</sup> R. and R. § 196, 198, 199, 200.



still admit, from the proximity in which they remain, the immediate recovery of the line whenever desirable.

*Second,* Where this movement is performed by one or two battalions, and is executed by companies or even grand divisions, they may, by wheeling back if prepared for it, take up the line *a z*, 208; displayed and preserved by their inward flanks.<sup>39</sup>

*Third,* The direct echelon is a favourable disposition for the attack, particularly if the object of that attack be to carry a certain point of the enemy's position. When so, the head is to be considerably strengthened, a strong body of cavalry is to follow in a third line, and, if deemed expedient, it may be still reinforced by a body of troops in column. Thus adequate to act by itself, it might engage, without committing the refused flank, which kept to the rear remains within the controul of the commandant, who may then dispose of those inactive echellons, according to circumstances, and either order them up in support of those a-head, or throw them into such a situation as may be calculated to countenance his design, and secure its success. Should the attempt fail and the assailing troops fall back, he may apply to them for protection; thus for instance, by drawing them into the oblique *e f* (*fig.* 198), he may

<sup>39</sup> As the direct echelon is more adapted to the manœuvres of the line, this formation by wheeling the divisions back is better suited to the oblique echelon, which is more inclined to favour the evolutions of one or two battalions.

by threatening the enemy's flank most probably check his pursuit, and extricate himself from the critical situation he is placed in, by withdrawing his worsted force under a favourable line of march.

That those great operations in echellon may spring from a line, originally parallel to the enemy, as well as oblique, will readily be supposed from the preceding sections. In the latter case, however, it may be observed, that to impede the doubling of the inward files (*fig. 202*), an increased interval is to separate the battalions, that are thrown asunder, by moving in different echellons; those intervals are the best provided for before and while the troops are still in line, as, by being thus previously perpared, it will debar the enemy from taking advantage of a precious time, which, after the disposition is disclosed, he will most effectually employ to counteract the designed operation.<sup>40</sup>

*Fourth*, A column, while standing perpendicularly to the enemy's line, may easily convert into the direct echellon, by the corps, in masses, unfolding by their flanks, to disengage to the right, or to the left, or on both sides at the same time, and individually deploying afterwards on a named division, or grand-division (*fig. 191*).

*Fifth*, On leaving a defile, troops may, likewise, advantageously be thrown into the echellon situa-

<sup>40</sup> This doubling of the inward files may be seen in *fig. 202, 203*, and the mode of taking up a parallel line, where this defect in the formation has not been previously obviated, is exhibited in *fig. 202*, taken from the F. E and E.

tion ; if so, the head may halt before the defile, or advance in an oblique direction, and the other divisions file or perform, as may be desirable : this may be executed either when only a part of the force or the whole has passed through (*fig. 221*) ; and the assistance the echellon offers here, in leaving a narrow path, it likewise presents on entering the same ; when so, the two flank divisions face about, and at the same time, step off to the rear, followed by the others, which, in turn, relinquish their positions, so that the whole line is brought into a reversed double echellon (*fig. 222*). The passage is thus effected under the protection of the centre, which covers the movement, and ultimately follows in rear of all.

*Sixth*, Second lines, when in echellon, are to be completely guided by the first, and therefore, unless it be differently ordered, they are to follow the motions of the respective parts of the line, in the rear of which they are posted and considered to belong. We shall now, in conclusion, remark, that as actions are seldom so general as to involve the whole army at once ; some have been led to suppose, that all military conflicts, distinguished by this particular character, might not be improperly classed under the head of echellons ; this, by including almost the whole of the high tacticks within their precinct, would render their boundaries extensive indeed, and little congenial to the peculiar denomination of half formation, which we have ventured to bestow on them ; yet, as the propriety of this appellation has already been fully illustrated,

without attempting to intrude by needless repetitions, we shall merely, in order to expose the error of such an assertion, remark, that in conformity to the preceding sections, the echellon disposition immediately implies to be either direct or oblique, and that, consequently, all those constructions which cannot properly be reduced under those two positions, are obviously not belonging to this formation ; all actions which, therefore, do not present those relative situations among their different parts, are partial engagements, but they have no pretension to the claim of the echellon disposition, of which they partake, merely in a single feature, but differ in every other respect.

In proceeding to the oblique, we shall discover their use to be,

*First*, As a substitute to the oblique march, when in line (*fig.* 194).<sup>41</sup>

*Second*, Of a frequent application in all changes in the position of the line (*fig.* 212, 213, 214).

*Third*, Applied to the converting of a column into line (*fig.* 216), and such is its efficacy in the two last cases, that it enables both a line as well as a column, to take up any alignment within a fixed point of the position, or removed ground.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>41</sup> We have already observed, that this application of the oblique echellon to the inclined march is much abandoned since the half position has been substituted for the intricate step, by which it was before performed, and is still so in some services.

<sup>42</sup> In *fig.* 215, the third battalion shows how a line changes its position on a fixed point, and the other corps, how the same takes

*Fourth,* The facility which it affords to all changes in the position, extends its use to the very formation of the direct echelon, which, whenever it is to be taken up under an inclined position, is obliged to borrow the assistance of this auxiliary evolution to gain its obliquity and desired situation, and equally compelled to apply for its aid when it forms in an alignement not parallel to its line of march, circumstances explained before, and easily perceptible, by taking a view of *fig. 203.*<sup>41</sup>

place where the position is distant; *fig. 216* represents a column which converts into line on a flank division when the line is advanced; *fig. 217* the same manœuvre where the line is retired; *fig. 218* and *219* display central evolutions and formations.

“ Thus included within the same appellation the bond of connection is still strengthened from the mutual aid they afford each other; for, if the oblique echelon be necessitated whenever performed on a large scale, to take up the array of the direct echelon, and to convert into it; the direct echelon is, in its turn, compelled to call for the help of the oblique, whenever the parallel position to the original line is to be deviated from on formation.

## CHAPTER X.

### FILE MOVEMENTS.<sup>1</sup>

THE position in file is one of those formations which we have likewise distinguished by the name of half, or imperfect, as being inapplicable to action, and of a mixed nature, participating both of the line and the column: its similarity to the line arises from its very appearance, which, indeed, merely differs from it in the men who, individually, have changed their positions to either flank, and who, without quitting their ground, look to a side instead of to the front; and to the column, from the peculiar feature of that order, and the succession in which the fractional parts of the battalion are made to follow, which is here retraced in the manner in which the files are brought to step in each other's rear.

<sup>1</sup> R. and R. part i. § 33, 45; part iii. § 94, counter-march.

The movement so far defined, we shall, without repeating rules already elucidated, proceed to unfold its execution, premising it by the observation, that although the nature of the faults will remain the same, whether a few or many files are thus marched by the flank, they will, from being multiplied and not so readily discovered, grow more important as the body is more considerable: half a battalion, for the purpose of counter-marching, must, however, not be deemed as too extensive a force, and a battalion, in order to increase or decrease an interval, should, if required, also be capable in its entire, to step under that position for 200 or 300 paces, without any material loss of distance or disorder from it becoming perceptible; nor will this be attended with the difficulty generally supposed, as the irregular practices which but too frequently attend this evolution, spring more from the erroneous notions entertained respecting its execution, and from the absence of principles, than from the principles themselves, and their intricate applications.

In the late British Rules and Regulations, the ordinary cadence was recommended whenever half a battalion, or upwards, moved in file: this injunction, however, was not strictly complied with, nor does it claim the attention to which most of the other directions contained in it are so deservedly entitled, since the execution, evidently meant to be facilitated by it, is, if any thing, rather clogged, and the motion hindered as the pace is slackened;

experience will evince, that the description of step used in the quicker time is that more congenial to the file movements.

When a division files singly (*fig. 223*), the platoon officer leads the front rank and his doubling serjeant the rear rank; they accordingly face with the men, when the change of front is to the right, and they face about to shift their flank, if it be to the left. When the body consists of more than one company, or division, the officers take a side step out of the ranks (*fig. 224*), and are replaced in their positions in the front rank by their covering serjeants: hence, when the facing is to the right, the officers are placed, and they move next to their intervals; but if to the left, as they and their serjeants must repair to that side to lead their men, the former take post each next to the ground vacated by the officer on his left, whose position his serjeant occupies. Had a subaltern officer been brought on the left of the front rank, this alteration in the platoon leaders and their coverers, might be dispensed with, and by remaining on the right, they may be made to follow their companies on the march (*fig. 225*). Whatever might have been the arrangements respecting the position of the officers, the principles, by which the march is here regulated, are the same, and similar to those delivered for the open column. The leading officer moves on two objects, one of which is shown to the second, who keeps the leading officer in line with it, the third platoon chief moves on both the first and second,



leaders, the fourth covers the second and third, and so on (*fig. 224*).

Little additional information will be derived from a reference to the foreign armies. In the French infantry<sup>2</sup> the officers take, as the British, a side step, and they are likewise replaced in their positions in the front rank by their serjeants;<sup>3</sup> but they do not move to the left when in battalion the motion is towards that flank, the corps is then led by the under officer stationed on the left of the front rank—(this we have already observed, might likewise be attended to in our battalions which are still better prepared for it, by an officer, instead of a serjeant, in them being thus posted on the left flank). At six paces outwards, to the front of the front rank, the adjutant-major and the adjutant march, the former in line with the leading file, and the latter opposite the centre of the battalion (*hauteur du drapeau*).<sup>4</sup>

By the Prussians, the officers take the side step, and alter their flank, when the movement is to the left. Amongst the Russians, the platoon commanders step also out of the ranks, and perform

<sup>1</sup> F. R, *école de peloton*, No. 120, *école de bataillon*, No. 558—570.

<sup>2</sup> When a *peloton* moves separately by files to the left, the leader changes his flank to conduct, the *guide de gauche* takes post a-head of the front file, and the *guide de droite*, who remains on the right follows the front rank.

<sup>4</sup> R. I. der N. *bataillons school*, 566—578; they perform as the French.

this as customary with the French, whether the division operates singly or in the battalion, and lastly according to the Austrian manner, not only the officers in charge of divisions (*zugen*), remain in the ranks, but even the supernumeraries join the same, when the battalion is ordered either to stand or to march in file.<sup>5</sup> This latter practice seems of a tendency to disturb the advance, while the controul offered by the officers, who cover each other out of the ranks, is of a nature to preserve the direction of march, the proper dressing, and the equality of step among the men: from walking independantly, it enables also those leaders better to check irregularities. The mode of removing the officers out of the ranks is therefore preferable, but as the considerations here alluded to, cease where the divisions act separately, the expedient might properly cease where its advantages fail to operate, particularly as in many cases (as for instance, where the divisions of a column are thus put on the march by their flank), its application would become objectionable from the officers' being then no longer able to dress on each other. Nor could the plea of analogy, or of consistency, be reasonably produced, as an atonement for the real inconveniencies which from it, would be suffered.

<sup>5</sup> A. R. haupt ii. absch v. § 1.

## SECTION II.

*Formation from File.<sup>6</sup>*

The position in file fully understood by the preceding section, we shall now proceed to describe the manner in which it is abandoned, by taking up the form of the column or of the line ; as the evolutions in file are chiefly designed to facilitate transitions in the position, those latter movements will much tend to illustrate the use of this disposition and its application in the infantry exercise : they, with a few manœuvres drawn from the practice of the foreign armies, will complete what is intended to be inserted under the present head for formation.

Commencing by the recovery of the line, we shall immediately observe, that a body in file right in front, forms to the left by the mere delivery of the word *halt—front*, and its obedience ; and that with the same facility troops, when the left is in front, may resume the line to the right (*fig. 223 A B*) ; but a more complicated motion must be resorted to, when the right is a-head and the formation is likewise to the right, or the formation is to the left when the left leads, as the mere halting and facing would then place the rear rank in front, interchange the wings, and remove almost every individual out of his true position ; and though immediate urgency to retrieve a line towards the former rear, may command such

<sup>6</sup> R. and R. part iii. general formation of the battalion from file, counter-march by files.

an operation, where this excuse of necessity fails, and where not so pressed for time, the preserving of the primitive arrangement must evidently be preferable, and to the longer expedient of the successive formation by files be referred, to fulfil an intention which, without it, cannot be so regularly accomplished; when so applied, the front man of the head file halts, and by immediately facing either to the right or the left, assumes the ordered front, while his centre and rear rank men cover him; the remaining files continue on the march and, in stepping behind, take post in succession by wheeling up each as it gains its ground of occupation. Thus all in turn acquire their positions, till the last file, by entering the line, completes the formation (*fig. 226*). In every division the men will here be dressed by their own platoon officer, who, from the part last formed as standing point,<sup>7</sup> is, as they join, to correct them on the distant object B, and who, so soon as he sees all the files under his charge, properly situated, delivers the final command *eyes—front*, and relieves his serjeant who, while engaged, preserved his position on the right,<sup>8</sup> and now falls back in the rear rank.

<sup>7</sup> In wheeling into line as well as in all successive formations by files, divisions, &c. the platoon commander invariably, to dress his men, takes post opposite the third outward file of the next company on the standing flank, and on those three last files as point of *appui*, effects his correction on the distant point (*R. fig. 226*).

<sup>8</sup> When the formation is from the left as the officer and his serjeant step before the left file, the serjeant, on entering the line

On the same principle, and with still greater facility, may a battalion or body in file form to the front; for, supposing the right to be the conducting flank, at the command *left—front form* (*fig. 227*), the head file merely halts, the centre and rear rank men of it instantly gain their appropriate situations in rear of their file leader, and the other files, after performing a half face to the left so as to front the new position, move up and successively take post on the line in which they are all situated and fixed, as before, by their respective platoon chiefs. Had the left been a-head (*fig. 228*) a similar operation takes place, only as the files must then move up to the right, the command *right—front form* is substituted for that of *left—front form*.

Were the formation to the front, but the line to face to the former rear, the front rank man of the leading file would have to face about and his centre and rear rank men quicken their motion to cover him in rear, the other files, in passing behind them, march on until they in turn arrive opposite to their stations when they wheel short on the alignment;<sup>9</sup> every company, as heretofore, is takes post on that flank of his company, and there provides for the place, not of his own platoon leader, but of that of the division on his left. When his officer has dressed his men, on his pronouncing the words *eyes—front*, the serjeant, faces about, and, as well as his officer, shifts his flank to take his proper station on the right.

<sup>9</sup> It is easily seen that when a body in file right in front is to form a line so as to face to its former rear it must occupy the ground to its right, to which side the files are accordingly to wheel in succession; were the left in front, the operation would be to the left.

dressed by its officer. When this movement is executed, while the right leads, the command is *to the right about right—front form* (*fig. 230*), and when it is to the left *left about left—front form*. Those evolutions admit of a different performance from those just explained, for, so soon as the leading file has changed its front, and the centre and rear rank men of it cover in rear, the men of the remaining files may, by a half face towards the rear rank, step at once into the new line, and there face about, as they gain their positions (*fig. 231*). Of those two methods, the latter is of a speedier completion, but it presents a looser execution, and has the defect of requiring a dressing to the rear; as this latter movement besides is not of a description to favour the evolution of a body much exceeding the front of a battalion, the time gained by it must always be trifling, whilst the disorder it may produce might become of moment; the first, therefore, lays a claim to eligibility, while the use of the second should be confined to those occasions only, where, like in the central formation, the application of the first fails, and the second though the more irregular movement, must be employed for the files a-head of that directing the alteration (*b fig. 229*).<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> *Fig. 229* will soon evince the inefficiency of the regular manner, in its application to the files in front of that directing the alteration. By the first mode, the formation and half face of the men are always towards the front rank (*fig. 227, 228*), and by the second towards the rear rank (*fig. 231*).

Should any of those preceding formations of the line be required on the rear instead of the front file, the ceremony of facing the whole to the right-about would merely prelude and distinguish the operation, which, from the last file then brought a-head, would admit of a similar performance to that described; and were a central file named to regulate (*fig. 229 A*), that central file is first correctly situated, those in its rear are made to manœuvre, as explained where the *alignement* is to the front, and the formation on the head file; while those in front, after facing about, perform by the second method, and as where the line is to face to the contrary way and former rear.<sup>11</sup>

A contracted but similar evolution to that explained for the line will again offer itself when converting from file into column, since the mode of execution will be the same; but, instead of running through the whole, the performance will be confined to the limits of a narrower and named portion of the battalion, which portions operate each by itself. The front, from being here reduced, will, however, present both an easier and a speedier movement, and from the greater facility it exhibits in performance, admit of the two-fold circumstance of an execution while on the march as well as while halted. When,

<sup>11</sup> By the central formation a line may be presented, likewise, facing to its former rear; if so, the directing file is first turned and situated, the others are then all brought to look towards it, and after being made to take their half face, marched into their positions according as their relative situations point out (*B fig. 229*).

under the latter case, it occurs while standing still, on the command, *form' divisions, subdivisions, or sections, &c.* as may be desired, the front file of each of the fractional parts so mentioned stands fast, while the other files belonging to it, take a half-face to move up at the word *quick-march*, and form as explained; the men are dressed by their leader, who, during progress, gains the distant flank,<sup>12</sup> and from it utters, as his last man joins, the words *halt—dress*, and, finally, *eyes front*. Nor will any greater difficulty appear when it happens on the march; since the only dissimilar circumstances which then present diversity between the two manœuvres, consist in the front files, which, instead of remaining stationary, continue to advance, and in the rear files that, instead of awaiting for the word *quick-march*, immediately move up at the caution, and hurry their step to gain their positions. The officers, as before, move to the true pivot flanks, thence to give the words *eyes—right* or *eyes—left*, to apprise the men with the directing side, but allowing them rapidly to take up their dress themselves, they resume immediately their appropriate occupations, while in column, namely, covering and distance.

Of those several file movements adopted in the British army, two can properly be considered only

<sup>12</sup> In all formations from file into column, as the motion is to the left when the right leads, and to the right when the left is a-head, the leading files must always be placed on the reverse side, and the platoon officers remove to the opposite flank to gain their column position on the pivots



as suiting the line, namely, that first explained ; where the original formation is recovered by merely halting and fronting, and that last described, where the body in file converts into column. The long process the others require, their tendency to extension, disadvantages much increased by numbers, leaving but little chance for their applications beyond two or three battalions at the utmost.

An attention, very essential in all successive formations by files, is for those who step behind the part of the line already restored, to keep well closed up to it, as otherwise unnecessary ground must be paced over, and consequently from it unnecessary fatigue be derived. The files, in coming up, are to be warned also against improper hurry, so as not to enter the alignment before their immediate inward neighbours, on whom they are to dress ; without this attention, as their positions would remain undetermined, they would most probably overshoot their line of dress, and if so, much retard the formation, or, by throwing the following files to the front, give a false direction to it. Whenever the files move independently to the front or to the rear, which is always the case when converting from file into column, the individual, in marching up, is to be careful to remain close to the man immediately preceding him, who just enters the line before him ; his looking, while in motion, continually over his outward shoulder, will here most effectually secure regularity during the evolution.

Thus terminating what refers to the British, we shall now examine the file movements, as they relate to the foreign armies, and endeavour to delineate the use they make of that formation.

In the Prussian Reglement,<sup>13</sup> the manner in which a battalion from column is to be brought in file, is noticed; in every division, the reverse file moves straight on, and the remaining files face, and successively wheel behind it, so that the whole battalion is brought in file (*fig.* 232); but this, which seems restricted by them, to a direction in the line of march previously pursued, is capable of a contrary motion, if the divisions face to the pivot flank, and the files proceed to the rear (*fig.* 133.)

Among the Danes, all formations from file, are like when wheeling, performed in a run, which is much calculated to present a disorderly line, though somewhat speedier.

By the French, as well as the troops of the Netherlands,<sup>14</sup> two *jalonneurs* are placed so as to stand with their right shoulders if the formation be from the right, or left shoulders if from the left, against the two flank men of the directing platoon: on those two markers, the outward guides of the following platoons, dress, by covering them, as they step to the front each as his last file is in the act of

<sup>13</sup> P. R. absch. lii. kapt. vii. § 9.

<sup>14</sup> F. R. *école de bataillon*, 571—582; R. I. *des N. bataillons* *school*, 579—590.

entering the *alignement* (*fig 234*). In this instance, and perhaps in this instance only, this mode of formation and prolonging a line seems to possess peculiar advantage, for, as nearly the whole platoon is formed before its outward guide takes his station to the front, it is of a nature to facilitate the dressing, and to determine the true direction of the line, without being any way subject to the reflection of betraying into unsteadiness in the performance.

But it is to the Austrian system we must look for an extended application of the file movements, and multiplicity of evolutions that formation is capable of. Although of those presented in their *Reglement* few are eligible, and some even objectionable, a short enumeration of the manœuvres included within the double file, will still be of use, since, while it will assist in unfolding the Imperial system of tactics, from those movements being almost peculiar to it, it will afford an opportunity to exhibit the several combinations of which the object itself is susceptible.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> On entering this subject, I must, however, premise it by the observation, that the Austrian *Reglement* invariably presents the elucidation of the movements, first, for one battalion, then for two, and lastly, for three, the strength of their infantry regiments. To avoid repetition, I have merely adhered to this arrangement so far as the matter rendered it indispensable, blending the execution under the three circumstances together, whenever the difference of strength did not influence the operation, and presented no variety in the performance. I have also taken the liberty of offering them under a different division, by classing them under the heads of five

*First Movement.* When the single battalion advances on its centre by files (*fig. 235*),<sup>16</sup> the colour-bearer, the two centre officers, as well as the three files on each side of them, step forwards, followed by the other files, which, after facing inwards, hang in their rear; the motion is directed by the colour-bearer, who marches on two objects; the adjutant rides on either side, the right or left of the leading rank to watch the advance, and, by occasionally looking behind, keeps a check over the column, and its regular progress; the three head files dress by the centre, the others towards the flanks (their own front rank men). When this is performed by two battalions, they both face inwards in order to close the interval; the leading flank captains then each take post next to the front rank man of his head file, and their corporals No. 1 each next to the rear rank man of the same; the battalions then march towards each other till sufficiently approached, when, by files, they wheel successively to the front, so as to stand abreast: corporal 1, of the right battalion, directs the march. The drummers and pioneers, when a single battalion thus performs, move close along the right company of the centre division, and when there are two, they march so that those of the corps on the right follow those of that on

movements, which, by collecting those nearly allied, and, by exhibiting the strong line of difference those file evolutions present, I am induced to think, will facilitate conception and assist recollection.

<sup>16</sup> A. R. haupt, ii. absch. v. § 1, 2, and 3.

the left. When three battalions so operate, the centre one acts as described for a single corps, the two others face and follow; yet, in starting off, they step out sufficiently to close the intervals before they wheel to move abreast.

Thus formed in double file, to recover the line, the centre stands fast, the files on the right move up to the right, while those on the left move up to the left (*fig. 236*); the additional interval between the battalions must of course be provided for when two or three execute together. When two corps, therefore, thus perform, the leading flank half-companies take first each six side steps, and then form by themselves; thus situated, they direct the alignment into which the rest are to take post afterwards. When three corps so operate, the two centre platoons (*fahnen pelotons*) of the centre battalion are likewise first situated, to display the new line before the formation is attempted. Should the line be presented towards a flank (the right or left), instead of to the front, the six head files, if the battalion be single, wheel into the new direction, into which, one half of the files also immediately faces, while the other half (those on the opposite side) moves up, and successively forms by files in the prolongation (*fig. 237*). Were two battalions thrown abreast so to execute, the one faces and the other marches on till it has provided for the interval of 12 paces, and then, successively, by files, forms next to it: the manner in which three battalions would perform is easily known from the preceding.

*The Second Movement* consists in the battalion which, led by its flanks, is brought into a double column of files in front of its centre;<sup>17</sup> when so, the three right companies and colour-bearer face outwards to the right, and the three left companies to their left; the flank captains, with their covering-corporals, gain the positions described, on each side of the leading files (*fig. 238*). Thus prepared, both wings counter-march, and move along the front till nearly approached and opposite the centre, when they wheel outwards to the front to proceed abreast: the right flank captain is provided with objects to regulate the march. The mode in which two or three battalions would here perform, will readily occur from the explanation given for a single battalion.

When such a body in double file, led by its flanks, is to regain the extended position, it is accomplished by the files successively wheeling outwards; the point where they are to alter the direction of march (*a fig. 239*), is prepared as well as two distant objects, *y z*, provided for to regulate the advance along the new alignment; as the leading files, as well as those following, in turn, approach the marker *a*, they wheel outwards, those of the body on the right to the right, and those of the body on the left to the left, and thus, gradually opening from the centre, move along the line until they are halted and fronted; the rear (*b*) moves straight forwards and halts on joining the new alignment.

<sup>17</sup> A. R. haupt. ii. absch, v. § 4, 5, and 6.

From the disposition in double file, as shewn in *fig. 238*, a line may be equally presented on the rear rank, fronting to the rear,<sup>18</sup> by the whole, in the first instance, facing about, and then forming on the centre platoons (*fahnen pelotons*), which, by the change of front are brought a-head;<sup>19</sup> and this reversed formation might be taken up also to the right or to the left flank, if the files on the right or left face outwards towards their rear rank, and those abreast face about and successively by files, form in the continuation of the line of those already situated: when the extended position is thus retrieved on the rear rank, the *chargen* (officers and non-commissioned officers) exchange places, as directed for the battalion, when it is so *formed to the rear*.

*Under the third Movement,*<sup>20</sup> are included those evolutions in which the battalion, or regiment, is thrown in double file, but where the divisions step separately and by themselves, instead of coupled together, this admits of two performances, for the battalion may either by its centre face outwards, so as to divide into two bodies in file, led each by a flank (*fig. 240*), or the whole may face to the same side, and then be brought into two similar divisions in file, in front of either the right or left flanks of both wings of the battalion (*fig. 241*).

<sup>18</sup> By the Austrian formation to the rear, *formirung der front rückwärtz*.

<sup>19</sup> This would also answer for three battalions, but for two, the two inward half companies are to be first posted for formation

<sup>20</sup> A. R. haupt. ii. absch. v. § 4, 5, and 6.

When two corps thus operate, they file each by itself, and if there be three, the centre battalion acts either with the first or third, so that they are still formed into two divisions, or columns of files.

When the double file thus separately marches in front of each flank, the position in line may be readily resumed by a formation towards the centre, and by the files on the right, which form to the left, and those on the left that form to the right (*fig. 240*); but where the files are advanced before the right or left of each wing, they all come up and form to the same side (the right or left). In those formations, it is further to be remarked, that where a battalion operates alone, the flank leading platoons (*zugen*) of the two columns are antecedently brought up and properly placed to determine the alignment; and that, where two or three battalions thus manœuvre, the two leading half companies must, to the same effect, be so previously situated. The file positions included within the head of the third manœuvre, may, by facing about, likewise, present a line, formed to the rear on the rear rank, *formirung der front rückwärts*.

It is to be observed that, amongst the Austrians, in all file movements, the supernumeraries, both officers and non-commissioned officers, step into the rear rank, and that, whenever the line is regained, under the *reverse formation of the rear rank in front*, the alterations specified as distinguishing that reversed position, are taken up by the *chargen*, drummers, &c. so soon as the line is completed; finally,



that all successive formations from file, are completed in the quick cadence.

*Fourth Movement*, the movements explained as performed on the front rank, may likewise be all repeated to the rear on the rear rank,<sup>21</sup> by the line previously facing about, and, after changing front, performing in a manner similar to that described. Were, for instance, the position in double file, behind the centre, to be produced, the line first faces about, the three files on each side of the colour-bearer move on, and the other files, after facing inwards, wheel and follow to couple in rear; the march is here as to the front, conducted by the colour-bearer, who, to perform this duty, has stepped in the rear rank between the corporals No. 7 (*fig. 244*). When this is performed by two or three battalions, the additional attention respecting the separating interval or intervals, must be observed as a matter of course. In retrieving the line, which is here on the proper front, it is directed that, for a single battalion, the centre files are precedently to be faced about, and to be properly placed to shew the new line (*fig. 244, B*); that where there are two battalions, the two half flank companies are first to be so fixed; and that the two centre platoons of the centre battalion are again antecedently to take post in the like manner, whenever the whole regiment, which consists of three, is thus to perform. Should, from this rear forma-

<sup>21</sup> A. R. haupt. ii. absch. vi, § 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6.

tion, the alignement be desired to the right or to the left, the line would be reversed.

In the like manner may, after facing about, a battalion or regiment be thrown in double file, led by the flanks, which, in counter-marching, couple so as to move a-breast before the former rear of the centre (*fig. 248*); or, if required, they may keep asunder, and march in two separate bodies, in rear of the two extremities of the line (*fig. 242*), or, of the same flank of both wings (*fig. 243*). The manner in which the line might be retrieved from any of those latter positions, will appear from the preceding; the additional attention in the individuals to recover their proper front, whenever it is the original formation which is to be presented, will also naturally suggest itself.

It is finally to be noticed that, where the double file position has been taken up in rear of the centre but is led by the flanks, it is susceptible, after resuming the true front, by facing about, of a central formation of the line on its proper front, and that an alignement under the regular disposition, may, likewise, be offered to either flank, by one column facing outwards, and the other facing about and by files successively forming next to it (*fig. 248, B C*).

The *fifth movement*, which comprehends the modes of converting from file into column,<sup>22</sup> admits of the circumstances of this occurring under the single

<sup>22</sup> A. R. haupt. ii. absch. xii. § 2 and 3.

as well as the double formation. Thus a body in file may, after halting, (for cessation in the march is essential, according to the Austrian practice, in all formations from file), move up to the front of *zugen* (platoons), half companies, or half divisions, and when this is accomplished receive the command to resume the advance. On leaving a defile, any of those columns may be equally presented, in succession by the head files, as they quit the narrow straight, immediately obliquing, and by those in rear, which are to dress on them, to establish the desired fractional part, stepping out ; as each division (fractional part) is formed, it receives the injunction to resume the straight march. In this manner, may the whole at once run up to the front of battalion ; when so, however, and probably to facilitate the manœuvre, it is enjoined for every division (*abtheilungen*), to keep a pace to the rear of that preceding, as may be seen in *fig. 245*.

On the same principle as for a single is a double column of half companies, half divisions, or divisions, &c. to be converted into from double file. Were the centre to lead, the files in rear move up, and form outwards to the right and to the left, and were the flanks a-head, as the formation must take place towards the centre, the front files oblique so as to give sufficient room for those in rear to advance between them.<sup>23</sup> Those operations are also

<sup>23</sup> This performance, in which the leading files open out by inclining outwards and obliquing so as to give room for those in their rear to step between them, is called by the Austrians to deploy by

liable to a performance to the rear on the rear rank.

Were the contrary evolution now desired, and the column to be reduced to the formation in file, if single, the divisions face and file in each other's rear, as already explained (*fig.* 232); but should a central column be required to convert into double file, the divisions face inwards, and, led by their centre, wheel outwards to join, and to march a-breast (*fig.* 246). It will be easily understood that where one (or if three, the centre one) so operates, the colour bearer, the centre officers, and the three files on each side are, instead of facing, to move straight forwards, thereby to gain the situations, in which they are described in the first manœuvre (*fig.* 235), the formation here designed to be adopted; but should from double column, led by the flanks, the double file be formed, some slight difference would arise in performance, as the divisions of the column would then have to face outwards from the centre (*fig.* 247), and thus separated after wheeling by files, have to close inwards, so as to join again on the march.

Amongst the multiplicity of evolutions here offered but few are entitled to any particular consideration, and although their explanations, from

files, *deploïren*. It might also be here remarked that, when a body is brought in file, they distinguish that formation by the name of *Reihen-colonnen* (column of ranks), a name which induced me in the course of those explanations occasionally to call the body while situated in file, a column, though it does not strictly come within the acceptance of that word.

being repeated for one, for two, and for three battalions, seemingly by restricting their use, to the latter number, much enfeebles the reflection which an application to a more extended front might suggest. There are, after all, but the double centre file positions, both before and behind the line ; and their several formations to the front, to either flank and by facing about to their former rear, which seem to claim a right of admittance in a body of manœuvres, and which, as such, are entitled to share in the practice of the field exercise.

The mode of converting a column into a body in file, as employed by the Prussians, likewise deserves the sanction of authority ; and under that protection may be even extended in its application, where the future motion is to the rear as well as to the front.

## CHAPTER XI.

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### OF THE LINE.

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**WE** are now going to consider the line, at once the primitive order of the infantry, and that in which it is generally brought into action ; of which position the constant relinquishment for the purpose of march, and recovery for the purpose of engagement, both reveals the defects and asserts the excellence ; since, by almost including the other movements as merely instrumental to its use, it fixes a priority to it, to which the formation in file, that of echellon, nay even the column cannot pretend.

Thus important, I have been induced to defer the elucidation of the line to the last, and as the knowledge of the column, the echellon, and the file movements are all in great measure indispensable to acquire a complete acquaintance with this more momentous formation ; the arrangement derives assistance from the association they present, and stands protected against the censure of

deviation from a practice which is sanctioned by so many able writers, who have introduced the infantry tactics by what relates to the extended position.<sup>1</sup>

That the order I have adopted, however, besides the regular progress it establishes among the manœuvres as alleged, and the facility instruction derives from it, will still gain strength when the application of the formation in line on service is considered, will appear, when it is reflected, that although troops generally at first fall in line, they are immediately made to abandon that position for the column to proceed under the latter formation to the seat of action,<sup>2</sup> and on arrival thither, either at once, or through the aid of the echelon or file movements, recover the original formation, which they at first took up, but immediately forsook as inconvenient for progress. This reference, which has been attended to in the general division of the movements, and which has likewise hitherto dictated the

<sup>1</sup> Among the authors who have introduced the infantry tactics by the line, we find General Saldern and Scharnhorst; but the division, in which they present the movements is not very satisfactory, particularly the first. This mode of beginning by the line has also been adopted in both the Prussian and Austrian Reglements as well as the Field Exercise and Evolutions. In the late Rules and Regulations, and in the French Reglement what refers to the extended position is given in conclusion, and the succession, in which the movements are presented in them, is not unlike that, in which they are offered in the present work.

<sup>2</sup> It is in conformity to this practice, that the formation, which is in fact the only rule to which troops attend in falling in, was first spoken of, and preceded the elucidation of the manœuvres, which have then been described in the order here expressed.

interior classification of the several branches of instruction which constitute their knowledge, has been equally respected in the explanation of the line, in which, following the natural rotation in which the manœuvres offer themselves, as the disposition first taken up will probably need an alteration to precede the advance, we have followed the formation into line, by the changes in its position, and finally concluded by the march.

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## SECTION II.

### *Formation of the Line.*

The formation of the line may take place from the open and the close column, the echellon, and the file position.

*From the open column; First,* by the divisions at once wheeling into line:

*Second,* By the column first proceeding to the new ground, and according as it reaches the same at the spot its head, rear, or any central part, is to be placed, entering it, and when posted wheeling up.

*Third,* By the movement called successive formation, in which the head division wheels immediately into its position, and the remaining divisions move behind it, to take in turn their stations in the continuation of its alignment (*fig. 251*).

*Fourth,* By the application of the oblique echellon, the formation may take place on a head, a



rear, or any central division, and so that the line faces either to the front or to the rear.

*When from Close Column :*

*First,* After recovering the distances betwixt the divisions, the line may be retrieved by the application of any of the modes enumerated for the open construction.

*Second,* Under the close shape, the intention of presenting a line may be accomplished by referring to a peculiar movement, distinguished by the name of deployment.

*From the Echellon, both Direct and Oblique .*

*First,* The divisions may wheel back into the line preserved by their inward flanks.

*Second,* The rear divisions may move up, and form on the head one, which stands fast, or which, if required, has been previously wheeled up or back into the designed direction.

*Third,* The evolution just explained as occurring on the head, may also take place on the rear, or any central division, which, when so regulating, may equally stand fast, or be previously wheeled up or back into the desired alignment.

*And lastly, from Files :*

*First,* To the front, and so that the line faces to either the former front or rear.

*Second,* On the rear, or any central file, so that the line may be equally presented, facing either side, front, or rear.

*Third,* When the formation is to either flank, right, or left.

The recovery of the line from the echelon and file positions, already spoken of, will demand no further elucidation; their enumeration will therefore suffice, and merely appear here to complete what relates to the formation of the line; but, as the taking up of an alignement from column is a branch of tactics still untouched, a more ample description will be desirable, to illustrate the modes by which those alterations, tending to the resuming of the primitive disposition from column, are effected.

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### SECTION III.

#### *Formation of the Line from open Column.<sup>3</sup>*

As the formation of the line from open column generally results either from a wheel of its divisions, or from the movement distinguished by the name of successive formation, we shall anticipate what relates to the present subject by unfolding the mechanism of those two evolutions which are chiefly instrumental to its performance.

<sup>3</sup> R. and R. part ii. § 50, 62; part iii. § 118, 119, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 153, 158; part iv. open column of the line, § 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 186; M. and P. attention of covering-serjeants, attention of platoon officers, wheeling into line, adjutants, commanders of battalion, half of column, dress, march into an alignement, B. of G. O. 20, 22, 24.

*Wheeling.*

This movement already described amongst the elementary movements,<sup>4</sup> will allow us at once to proceed to its execution for a battalion: when this is intended, at the caution *on the right (or left) wheel into line*, the pivot-men of the divisions face outwards into the new alignment (*fig. 45*); they are corrected by the battalion chief or adjutant, on the distant point D, the platoon commanders also leave their flanks to post themselves one pace in front of the centre of their respective divisions, and the covering-serjeants remove to the right if the wheels be to the left, or behind the right file if to the right;<sup>5</sup> a serjeant of the leading division runs out to take his station on the line of the pivots, so as to mark the spot where his outward wheeling man is to arrive and cease the circular advance. Thus prepared, the command *quick—march* is given, when, on its delivery, eyes are turned to the respective wheeling men, who, at a pace of 33 inches, and by the principles already deduced, conduct their divisions round, while the captains, who face about to superintend the motion of their men, step back, and incline each towards

<sup>4</sup> See chap. v. from § 11 to § 18 inclusive.

<sup>5</sup> Were the motion to the right, and the covering-serjeants still permitted to take their stations on that flank of their companies, they would stand in the way and interfere with the pivots; they are, therefore, on those occasions, removed to the rear, ready, as the wheel concludes, to step into their officers' places.

the pivot of the preceding company, and, in removing about two files beyond the same, from thence, deliver individually the words *halt—dress*, so soon as each perceives his own wheeling man close upon the side pivot; on those three files as point of *appui*, the officer then situates his company on his pivot-man as point of correction; as he accomplishes this, he gives in a moderate tone of voice, *eyes—front*, and recovers his station on the right by replacing his serjeant, who, while he was out of the ranks, preserved it, and took it up by following the motion of the wheel if the movement has been to the left, or, by stepping into the same on the conclusion of the arch, had the motion been to the right: the covering-serjeants on being relieved, fall back in the rear rank.

As the dressing of the platoon officers is here internal, and within their divisions, they must on no account attempt to alter the position of their pivot-men, which, fixed by the commandant, are supposed to be critically situated in the determined line: were they not so, it would, of course, become the peculiar province of the battalion chief, to redress those mistakes which he himself had committed.

At the executive command *quick—march*, musick, drummers, and pioneers, repair to their appropriate stations under the extended position, which the supernumeraries also gain by following first the circular march of the fractional part to which they appertain, and by stepping back after

wards two paces, on the delivery of the word *halt—dress*.

Were a column of subdivisions, or sections, thus to operate, the differences which would arise from it are immaterial, and merely those the reduced front of the column points out as indispensable; thus, for instance, all the pivots would have to face into the line, and the captains to take post in front of the leading subdivision, or section, of their companies, while the officers and under officers, in charge of the remaining subdivisions and sections, would have immediately to proceed to the spots appropriated to them when the companies wheel in their entire. At the command *quick—march*, the several parts move about their respective pivots, they are arrested by their captains, who, each gives the word *halt—dress* for the whole of his company.

In wheeling into line, the general caution and command of execution *quick—march*, are delivered by the battalion chief, and the word *halt—dress* uttered by the captains. To ensure precision, arms are invariably to be carried while wheeling.

Should, on forming the line, chasms separate the companies, and either of the flank divisions thus be divided from the battalion, its leader is immediately to redress the error by joining it to the main body,<sup>6</sup> but this latitude is not extended to

<sup>6</sup> He would, of course, after facing himself his men, by the words *right (or left) close, march*, order them to incline to the right, or to the left, by the side step.

those in charge of central portions of the line, who must await for an injunction of the battalion commander to do so. When only one opening is thus to be corrected, the chief will, after cautioning the companies which are to perform the side step, deliver the word *march* to put them in motion, and the word *halt* to stop it again; but where several divisions are thus thrown asunder, although he would pronounce the general command *march* for the whole, the duty of arresting the companies would devolve on the captains, who, each would give it as he sees his men close upon the next division.

We will now, finally, remark, that owing to the removal of the platoon leaders who quit their flanks at the caution, and the circulars in the wheel, which take place on the flank firelock men, the line of formation will be about a pace behind that of *march*, while in open column; but this, far from subjecting to any inconvenience, promotes the evolution, for, besides the immediate advantage of relieving the officers from a position, where, if stationary, their services, except as markers, would be entirely lost, the distant object by it is left more distinct, and consequently the alignement easier taken up and dress easier rectified.

In this manœuvre, as every battalion executes by itself, no distinguishing circumstance proceeds from several corps acting in conjunction.

*Successive Formation.*

When the formation is derived from the successive wheel of the divisions, the caution is heard *to the right* (or *left*) *form* (and which must invariably be here to the reverse side of the column), the platoon chiefs shift their flank; the one of the leading division immediately gives the word *halt—right* (or *halt left*) *wheel*, as the case may require, and *halt—dress*, to place his men in the alignment, from the prepared point of *appui* A to the distant object z (*fig. 251*); the other divisions continue in the advance, and as they approach that already on the line, they are ordered by their officers to oblique to the right or left (and always towards the pivot side), to clear its rear rank, which, on being sufficiently accomplished, at the word *forwards* the straight march is resumed.<sup>7</sup> As the second division reaches the outward flank of the first, it receives from its leader the command *halt right* (or *halt left*)—*wheel up*, to take its position on the line next to it, in which it is properly fixed by its officer, who has rapidly stepped in front of the third file of that first one, from thence, as point of *appui*, to dress his men on the distant

<sup>7</sup> In the French infantry, the divisions, after wheeling, take four paces to the front to gain the alignment, and in the Austrian, ten; this, where the ground admits of it, by removing the necessity for those in rear to oblique, is calculated to promote steadiness in the performance, and is evidently as such a better contrivance.

object z, and who, so soon as he has effected this, delivers the command *eyes—front*, and resumes his station in the ranks; this is likewise repeated by the third when it gains the outward flank of the second, and so on by the fourth, the fifth, and those following, which each, in turn, circle next to that which preceded it in column till the last, by wheeling up into the *alignement*, completes the formation.\*

Were this performed by a line, the manœuvre would be the same as that explained for the battalion, the leading company, in each of the following corps, would only, after clearing the flank of the preceding division, have to advance sufficiently, so as, in wheeling up, to provide for the interval enjoined to separate the battalions.

Thus having acquitted myself of the task of explaining the two principal evolutions, accessory to the performance of the present movement, we shall now consider the movement itself, and in the prosecution of this design, attempt, by the check of a regular division, to simplify an object which, from the multiplicity of cases it is capable of, would, without this precaution, be apt to perplex and involve in difficulties. In offering the formation of the line therefore, first, in its plainest form, as the

\* Those successive formations appear particularly well appropriated when it is intended to prolong a position by adding two or three battalions to a flank, and where behind those already formed, the divisions may, under cover, step in rear, and gradually, as they arrive at their ground, take post on the *alignement*.



operation of a single battalion, we shall still call in the aid of subdivision, and, by classing the manœuvres referring to it under the three distinctive features of a performance, 1st, on the identical ground; 2nd, on a fixed point, intersecting the line of pivots; and 3rd, to a distant position, endeavour to remove all embarrassment.

*If on the identical Ground.*

*First,* The mere wheeling into line will suffice when the alignment is presented to the pivot side.

*Second,* When the line is to face to the reverse flank, the column must first change its head by the counter-march of divisions from the rear.<sup>9</sup> This, by removing the pivots to the side required, will enable the formation to be as before, completed by wheeling up.

*Formation into an alignment, that intersects the former position.*

*Third,* The division, on the point of intersection, is first wheeled, filed, or placed as desired, and the other divisions, after being made to front it, face, and by the flank march are moved in its front or rear, so as to regain the column position with it. When this is completed, the formation into line will merely demand the divisions to perform the quarter of the circle.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> This counter-march is explained, chap. vi. § 11.

<sup>10</sup> Had the rear or any central division been named to direct, those in front must first counter-march in divisions by files, so as to face it: when the rear one, therefore, is thus nominated to regulate, all but the last one will have to change their front; but were the formation effected for instance on the fourth division, No. 1, 2, 3, as

*Fourth,* The column, by first changing its head by the counter-march of divisions from the rear, may likewise offer a line facing to the contrary way and reverse flank, and if so the performance may equally take place on a front, a rear, or any central division.

*Fifth,* When the new alignment thus intersects the line of pivots, it is susceptible also of an application of the echellon movement, which, when so employed is equally liable to a front, a rear, or a central execution. The division of direction is first situated, and if not the front one, those a head are faced about, so as to look towards that acted upon; all the divisions except that directing are then wheeled into their relative positions, under half the angle, and marched up or back to the alignment.

*Sixth,* Should the intended line face to the rear, the column first changes its front by the counter-march of divisions by files, and then takes up the line position by echellons as before.

before it, would have only to counter-march: yet the mere facing about of those front divisions will generally answer as well, and if referred to, by saving the time employed in counter-marching be by far the shorter evolution. Had the counter-march, however, been performed, as no motion is here designed and immediate formation intended, the leading division of those which so altered their front to the rear, might by taking double distance when entering the new alignment (and for itself and for that regulating), by enabling all the divisions to wheel inwards, towards that of direction (*fig. 253*), avoid the necessity of a second counter-march in those which preceding that acted upon, had previously changed their front.

A remark which will suggest itself here, is the advantage of celerity the echellon presents, whenever the new alignement falls within an intermediate point of the old position, a favourable consideration which is still enhanced by the constant readiness this formation admits to convert into line while in progress.<sup>11</sup> But if so far preferable for two or three battalions, its eligibility fails when beyond that number, as the difficulty of moving an extensive front when divided into so many independant parts, as well as the great extent it demands for performance, must thwart an expedient which, then less recommendable, becomes frequently impracticable.

*Formation of the line to a distant point*

To a distant point the column may either proceed by the regular march, or after facing move in file; or by taking up the echellon position, thus gain the new ground. The future alignement may be in the prolongation of the ground quitted by the column; it may be perpendicular, oblique, or parallel to it.

*Seventh,* If in the prolongation, and the line be to face towards the pivot side, the column marches to it, and on arrival halts and wheels up.

*Eighth,* But were the line to face to the contrary way the column advances, and when the head reaches the ground, the successive formation becomes the appropriate manœuvre. The leading division, therefore, immediately wheels into the

<sup>11</sup> This constant readiness to re-form the line may be observed in *fig. 196*, and has been noticed in chap. ix. § 5, No. 43.

alignement, and those in rear step behind it to circle, in turn, next to it, into their respective stations on the line.

*Ninth*, The column, in changing its front by the counter-march of divisions by file, or by merely facing about, may, in the like manner, take up similar positions to the rear, and present a line, both facing to the pivot and the reverse flank.

*Tenth*, When the new position is perpendicular, the column, after it is brought to front the line of march, is put in motion, and on gaining its destination (as where the new ground is in the prolongation), the expedient of wheeling into line, or of forming by the successive formation, is applied according as the line is to face to the pivot or reverse side of the column.

*Eleventh*, In particular instances, a battalion in column may form into line by the head division that steps short, and the others, that, quickening their pace, oblique till disengaged in front and opposite their ground, when they rapidly advance towards it (*fig. 252*). As they in turn come up and join in the alignment of the first division, they dress on it, and in submitting to the motion of this leading division reduce their step to its time and length; when the rear of the column has gained its position in the prolongation, as the line is completed, the whole may be ordered to halt, or receive the injunction to resume the common length of pace, in order to continue the advance.<sup>18</sup> This movement

<sup>18</sup> In this manœuvre the head should begin to shorten its pace when the distance from the new line is about equal to the front of

which can barely suit but for a single battalion, has, from the peculiar situation in which the successive parts of the column are thrown while in motion, and the resemblance which is thought to be discovered in it to the spreading out of a fan, received the denomination of *eventail*, the French name for that article of comfort and luxury.

*Twelfth*, Were the situation of the new line oblique to the present position of the column, the regular march is first to convey the troops to the new ground, which is then, according as they join it by the spot their head, rear, or any central point is to be stationed, entered as described in the preceding, where, under the same circumstances, the similar three-fold movements, were applied to the alterations in the position of an open column (*fig. 123, 124, 125*),<sup>13</sup> from which the present operations merely differ in the addition of wheeling into line, which the increased desire of converting into the primitive position here demands.

*Thirteenth*, The column may, by facing and marching by its flank, remove into a parallel posi-

the operating force, otherwise the time left and the space will not admit of the performance, nor give a fair chance to the rear to come up; when the colours join on the line it is no longer the leading division, but them which regulate the dress. The new method of obliquing, by the facing of the individuals, would here, if introduced, considerably facilitate the execution.

<sup>13</sup> For the manner in which a column enters an alignment, by the ground its head, its rear, or any central point, is to be placed, see chap. vi. § 10.

tion,<sup>14</sup> and there, after resuming its front, wheel into line. Were the position towards the pivot side (*A fig. 119*), the facing and filing would be towards that flank, and the line front outwards and from the column; but were the alignment B to be taken up, the facing and the filing would be to the reverse flank, and the new line would front towards the former position. To occupy, therefore, the line A so as to face towards the column, or that B so as to look outwards and from it, a change of head of the column by the counter-march of divisions from the rear must precede the flank march.

*Fourteenth,* The column may likewise, by applying the regular march, move to a new parallel position, and there, on arrival, take post as it gains the same by the place its head, its rear, or any central part is to be situated.

It still remains to be observed, and the remark equally applies to the taking up of an oblique as well as a parallel position, that under those three cases of arrival at the ground of formation, by the spot the head, the rear, or any central part is to be placed, the future line may be presented to face either as the column or to its former rear; should the head division, therefore, be operated on, and the existing front be preserved (*A fig. 249*), the head division is placed with its pivot on the alignment, and the others, after facing towards their pivot side, are in file, led by that flank, made to resume their

<sup>14</sup> Chapter vi. § 6.

positions in its rear : but were the line to be offered in the contrary direction, and front the former rear of the column, B, the leading as well as remaining divisions would take up their new positions, by facing and filing towards the reverse flank ; and again, had the alignement been entered by the rear or any central part of the position, the wheeling of the divisions would be to the reverse flank C, were it intended for the line to face as the column ; but the change in the direction would be effected on the pivots D, were the line to front to the opposite side and former rear of the column.

When the new ground is approached by the position assigned for the leading division, and the line is to face as the column, the echelon movement may be resorted to, as suiting the occasion (*fig. 216*). The head division is accordingly properly situated, and the others, after they have been wheeled under half the arch, are moved up or back into the alignement ; and when the extended position is to be offered under the same circumstances of approach by the head and preservation of front, the successive formation may likewise apply (*E fig. 249*) ; the leading division takes post, and the others step behind, and as they arrive, in turn, wheel up in their appropriate places in the prolongation.

An observation, which will now conclude what relates to those formations of the battalion from open column into line, is, the necessity for an immediate wheel supplying the long and tedious movement explained under the appellation of the

successive formation, whenever an unexpected enemy suddenly appears on the reverse flank. It is true, that the primitive order will, by that means, undergo considerable alteration, nay, a complete decomposition will ensue, the wings will be inverted, the divisions brought out of their places, and, in fact, every individual will be removed from the post assigned to him; but, it is still the eligible expedient, as answering the pressing call of offering a line. Where time allows, those minor considerations of regular arrangement might and ought to be attended to, since they are productive of additional advantages, which, if within reach, cannot be neglected without imprudence; but, so soon as they interfere with defence, and the delay they occasion may tend to destruction, the principle is at an end and must give way to the more momentous consideration of safety.

#### OF THE LINE.

As the manœuvres of the line are, in those instances of formation, contrived on the same principles as those delivered for the battalion, they will admit of the same division; yet, as the whole act no longer in a single body as before, and every corps operates now by itself, some further instructions seem necessary to direct the particular course as well as the particular evolution to which each of them will be reduced in the general manœuvre; but this again will not be attended with great inconvenience, as it will merely impress upon the memory the recollection of two rules:



*First*, That the regulating battalion may take post and perform by any of the modes explained for the single corps.

*Second*, That the remaining battalions, after counter-marching by divisions in file<sup>15</sup> so as all to face that of direction, are, in separate columns, led by the division the nearest to the regulating point, to direct their march to their adjutants, who, in the general line, mark the rear of their positions (where, of course, their present last division is to be stationed), and to enter the alignment by the successive wheel of divisions as described for the taking up of an alignment, by the ground intended for the rear of the column (*fig.* 256, 257). Speediness in the execution, or other considerations may, however, induce to gain the position by the spot the head, instead of the rear, is to be situated, and if so, to manœuvre as explained where the alignment is thus taken up on the leading division; nor would any embarrassment arise from the ascertaining of that point, if so required, since the position of your own adjutant, and still more so that of the neighbouring battalion, towards the regulating corps, at the distance of only an interval, must most effectually remove every possibility of mistaking the spot.

<sup>15</sup> Were all the battalions, therefore, to the front of that of direction, they would have all to change their positions by the counter-march of divisions by files, so as to face it before they operate. The facing about might, however, be here likewise favourably substituted to the counter-march.

An enquiry, which will now naturally suggest itself, is, why the adjutant is directed to mark the rear of his battalion in the new line, as well as to know the reasons which have led to this preference, particularly as a shorter performance from proximity to the point of *appui* would result, were he removed to the other flank, at which the head of his battalion is to be placed: yet, the reply to this is simple, and not unsatisfactory; for, had he been directed to display the ground the nearest to the regulating corps, and position assigned for his leading division, he would have been compelled to take distance, not for his own, but for that of the next battalion on the directing side, as a view of *fig. 256* will render most obvious.<sup>16</sup> The successive wheeling in of the divisions, which is generally viewed as the most regular mode of entry, would not likewise be promoted by it, as, by leaving the point of *appui* to the rear, the battalion would, while on the *alignement*, both face and march in a contrary direction to the corps acted upon, and thus be obliged to take post on the line; nor can the additional ground the present situation of the adjutant compels to move over, be well alleged as an objection, as always trifling, it may be entirely avoided by leading the column to the ground destined for its head, a movement the rear position of the adjutant does not obviate, while to the con-

<sup>16</sup> In all central formations, the left flank of the corps acted upon, should be marked by the serjeant-major, or another steady-non-commissioned officer, or, what is still preferable, by a mounted officer.

trary, it promotes the subsequent operation of formation which will ensue, by offering an approached point of correction.<sup>17</sup>

In converting a general column into line, an attention incumbent on leaders of battalions is, after taking post, not to wheel up their own corps until the succeeding one is situated and fixed at least three divisions in the alignment.

*Formation on the Spot:*

When a column of the line is to form on the spot by wheeling up its divisions, it offers no difference whether it be executed by one or by twenty battalions, since, though at the same time, they each perform by itself (*fig. 254*) ; were the line to face to the reverse flank, the counter-march of divisions from the rear, executed by corps, to alter the line of pivots to the contrary flank, would merely precede the wheeling up for formation.

*Formation of a line which intersects the Position in Column:*

If a general column were thus to operate, the battalion of intersection takes post in the manner explained, and the other battalions, in separate columns move to their adjutants who mark the rear of their positions : suppose, for instance, a column right in front to effect such a change on its head division (*fig. 256*) : the leading battalion to which it belongs

<sup>17</sup> This entering by the rear of the position when taking up an alignment, was much insisted upon in the late Rules and Regulations.

gains its position as described, by the several parts, so soon as that a-head is posted, filing in its rear, to recover the column situation with it, and the remaining corps, in separate columns, right in front (as the right is, in the present instance, the nearest flank), move each to its respective adjutant, marking the left (the farthest point), and there enter the line by the successive wheel of divisions, or, perhaps, as in the instance of the fourth battalion, move to the right of the ground to take post, as mentioned where the alignement is so approached by the place to be occupied by the leading division. Should, under the same circumstance of intersection, the rear regulate, the last battalion operates as explained, while the other, to face it, first changes their front by the counter-march of companies by files, and thus situated, conducted by their left divisions, move in separate columns to their adjutants, who display their right the farthest flank, or they gain the left of their positions to perform on their head divisions.

Finally, were a central battalion acted upon, supposing still the right to head, that battalion is first posted, and when so, its two flanks are marked (*fig. 257*), to act as future points of *appui* to the adjutants, who, guided by them, take their stations on the line, those of the corps in front on the right, and those of the corps in rear on the left of their ground: the battalions a-head, in the meanwhile, change their front by the counter-march of divisions by files, or face about, so as to front the directing corps. Thus prepared, the new position

is taken up by the divisions of the regulating, as well as by those of the two adjacent battalions, on each side of it, by facing and filing into their situations, and by the remaining, except those belonging to these three corps, proceeding in battalion columns to their adjutants, or to the places where their head divisions are to stand.<sup>18</sup>

Those formations, where the alignement intersects the column, may, likewise, be effected in echelon; if so, the division formed upon is first fixed in its situation, and the whole of the remaining (after those in front are faced about so as to look all towards that directing) are placed under half the angle, and then marched up or back to it; yet, as it was remarked before, the use of those obliques will seldom be required on an extended front, but, if thus rejected for the whole, they may, however, on certain occasions, still preserve some partial influence over the evolutions of particular battalions.

*Formation on a distant Point:*

If in the prolongation; the general column, after moving to the ground of occupation, halts and wheels into line, when the line is to face to the pivot side (*fig. 254*): but if to the reverse flank, it

<sup>18</sup> On the same principle as where central, were any of the rear companies of the leading battalion, or any of the front companies of a last battalion performed upon, the divisions of the corps immediately adjoining in front or in rear of it might probably, more advantageously, likewise, file into their positions, instead of marching in a battalion column to their adjutant.

then demands the application of the successive formation. This latter manœuvre might here take place in two ways, namely, throughout and by the whole column that acts as a single body, or, by each corps, which operates separately on its own leading division; by the latter method, those leading divisions take all post on the line at one and at the same time (*fig. 255*).<sup>19</sup>

*Perpendicular Position :*

The same circumstances and same modes of execution which apply to the taking up of an alignment in the prolongation, equally answer when it is perpendicular; in referring, therefore, to *fig. 254, 255*, which exhibit those evolutions, we shall at once proceed to the positions

*Parallel and oblique :*

Which, to avoid unnecessary repetition, are also blended together; for, as the flank march of the column where the divisions face and file into their new positions, enumerated among the movements of the battalion (*fig. 119*), can no longer suit the line, the removal to a distant ground, whether oblique or parallel, and frequently even where perpendicular, must be confined to the regular march of the general column, the arrival of which, on the

<sup>19</sup> Of those two methods, the latter as the shortest, is infinitely the better, yet, where this formation to the reverse side is premeditated, and not the result of an unexpected event, the change of wings, by corps so as to remove the pivots on the line of direction in time, ready to wheel up when required, will always be more advisable.

new alignment, by the spot the head, the rear, or any central part is to be placed, will then alone constitute the difference of which the manœuvre is susceptible. To the discussion of these three distinctive features which the evolution exhibits, we shall, therefore, separately proceed.

*If on the head Division :*

The adjutant of the leading corps takes post where the inward flank is to rest, and as a distant object *z* (*fig. 256*) is provided for, his battalion is then faced, and by divisions filed into the alignment; the leading pivot-man, in taking post, leaves a distance equal to the front of his division from the adjutant, so that, in wheeling up, the flank man closes upon him; the adjutants of the other corps gallop to mark on the line, each the distant flank of his own battalion; the corps in separate columns march to their respective mounted officers, or, to the ground where their heads are to remain, and on arrival, execute according to the spot from which they operate.

*Alignment entered by the Rear :*

The entering of an alignment by the rear, already unfolded,<sup>20</sup> will require no further elucidation; we may, however, repeat, that battalion commanders in entering an alignment were, according to the late Rules and Regulations, invariably to accompany the movements of their leading divisions, and, by occasionally looking behind, without quitting their posts, to redress any small error in

<sup>20</sup> See chap. vi. § 5.

rear. In following the paths of the preceding battalions, they were also ordered not to follow up mistakes committed in front, and, by that means, to obviate the improper influence they would, without this timely interference, have on the rear of the column; but they were on no account permitted to alter the rate of march, or to indulge in a partial cessation of movement. To insure still greater precision, a serjeant well trained in the cadence and length of pace was directed to head every battalion.<sup>21</sup>

At the word *halt*, which is loudly announced, rapidly repeated, and instantaneously obeyed, all markers remain on the line, and every battalion chief immediately corrects his pivots on the nearest adjutant, who will be either about the head of the following, or the rear of his own corps.

But, notwithstanding the facility those additional aids offered for the regular entry and march on an *alignement*, present troops properly trained, as we have already observed, ought at all times to be fully adequate to take up a position when the mere point of entry is marked, and two points a-head are prepared to guide the advance, and these, with the accessory assistance afforded by the staff officers

<sup>21</sup> The ordinary time was by the R. and R. that fixed for the entering of a column into an *alignement*, but this has been properly altered in the F. E. and E. by which the entering of an *alignement* in the quick cadence is permitted: the situation of the field and mounted officers has, in the same work, likewise undergone some modification, as may be seen in chap. ii. § 10, note 48.



who superintend the wheeling in, and direct the course of the leading division, and the general, field, and mounted officers, who occasionally stop to permit a few divisions to pass them, suffice to enter a line for formation.

Were the line not meant to be straight, the posting of the adjutants is of course to be dispensed with, and both the preservation of distance and the following up of the curve traced out a-head, become the sole objects of consideration. In the latter, the platoon leaders may be somewhat assisted by the field and mounted officers stopping at the places where the alterations and deviations from the straight direction are more frequent or more material.

*Central Point:*

Should a column arrive by a central point, the divisions in front wheel in till that destined to be stationed on the spot operated has entered, when the column halts; the remaining divisions of the corps, partly on the line, as well as all those of that immediately following, face and file into their situations; the other corps in separate columns, direct their course to their adjutants, marking their rear, or to the ground their leading divisions are to rest.

Where a column at half or quarter distance thus operates, the manœuvre may be somewhat reduced as to time if the division which is to rest at the point of entry be ascertained before, as those in front may then, after wheeling, recover their

distances while on the alignement, and those in rear, without waiting, proceed to their stations on the line, and open out while on the march to their adjutants.

Under particular cases, the removal to a distant position may take place in echellon, by the divisions that first wheel under half the angle, and thus, step all along the diagonal, to the new ground, where, on arrival, the head takes post, the others regain their half position with it, and move up or back according as the new line be advanced or retired; yet, rarely possible and always difficult, those obliques will seldom be resorted to in the manœuvres of the line, unless they be partially adopted by some of the battalions which, when performing on their head divisions, may occasionally thus prefer to gain their stations on the alignement.

*French Formation of the Line:*

In considering the practices of the several European armies in the formation of the extended position, we will begin with the French, and introduce the subject by an investigation of the principles on which their theory is grounded: thus instancing a column (a *fig.* 258) right in front, we shall observe, that besides the presenting of a line to either flank, it may, likewise, form to the front c d, or e f, and, in either case, the line front towards g or h. The immediate movements, therefore, answering those six transitions, must constitute, in the French system, what is comprehended under the

formation into line from column. Were the position *e f* to be taken up, and the line to face to *g*, the column takes post by the successive wheel of divisions, and when on the *alignement* wheels up; but is the same line to be presented, so as to face to the contrary way (*h*), the formation is effected by a peculiar movement, which may be seen in *fig. 259*: were the lines *c d* to be taken up and to face to *g*, the oblique echellon would be the expedient applied; and were the same *alignement* required, but the line to front towards *h*, the regular and successive entry by divisions on the pivot flank, and the wheeling up would, like in the first case, fulfil the intention. The explanations of those evolutions will, therefore, complete the knowledge of the formation into line, as far as it relates to the French.

When a French battalion is to wheel up,<sup>22</sup> the commander, after halting his men, places himself about 15 paces in front of the head pivot, and from thence, facing him, effects his correction of the rear *guides* (pivots), which he follows by successively delivering the caution *à droite ou à gauche en bataille* (right or left wheel into line), and then the command *marche*, which latter, as that of execution, is, according to the French custom, repeated by the platoon chiefs.

<sup>22</sup> F. R. *école de peloton*, 204—223; *école de bataillon*, 112—145, 216—227, and 314—323; *évolutions de ligne*, 86—99. For the French modes of wheeling, see chap. v. § 15 and 18.

Were the direction, in which the column stands, to be somewhat altered after stationing the two leading *guides* (pivots), the chief, by the direction *guides à vos chefs de file*, which means pivots cover your file leaders, would enjoin the remaining of them, to take up their positions in the continuation of the line of those a-head : he then closes the divisions again to their *guides*, from whom they are now separated by the command *à gauche (ou à droite) alignement*, which is not repeated by the platoon chiefs, but complied with by their leaving their central advanced positions, to take post two paces outwards of their pivot men, on whom they place and dress their platoons ; this being accomplished, those leaders give the word *fixe*, and return to their column situation in front of their divisions. Thus prepared, the general caution is heard, on which the outward *guide* of the leading platoon (the one of the reverse flank) moves on the line of pivots, both to face and cover those already planted ; this last guide takes post so that in wheeling up, the third file of his platoon closes up to this inward arm : the caution is then followed by the word *marche*, which, taken up by the platoon chiefs, is obeyed by the men posted next to the *guides* in all the divisions, who face into the *alignement*, and lightly with their breasts touch each the outward arm of his respective *guide*, while the remaining men take up the circular march to move round in the ordinary time till within two paces from the aligne-

ment, where they are arrested by their platoon commanders, who take their proper stations in the line, on the right of their platoons, and from thence pronounce the word *alignement* (dress), they, after situating their platoons in the direction displayed by their faced flank men, conclusively give the word *fixe*, which answers to our command *eyes-front*. As the line is now restored, the supernumeraries resume their distance of two paces from the rear rank, and the battalion chief directs the *guides* by the words *guides à vos places* to leave their advanced positions, and to regain their proper posts in the battalion. But had the *guides généraux* and colour bearer been on the line as well as the *platoon guides*, the process somewhat varies, as immediately after the cessation of march, the battalion chief from behind the colour bearer begins by rectifying any error in his position, as well as in that of the *guide* in his front, which he does on the distant point, while the adjutant likewise properly situates the one in rear. When those three are so critically stationed, the *guide* of the platoons are by the command *guides sur la ligne* called to take post between them, and so that each preserves the true distance for his own platoon from that preceding. They are then all rapidly corrected by the adjutant-major, who faces the leading *guide généraux*, and is here assisted by the adjutant, who stands behind the rear one; when this is effected, the divisions are, at the voice of the battalion chief, closed and dressed on their guides, as mentioned in

the preceding, by the platoon leaders who, after performing it return to their column position in front of their divisions, and the line is recovered in the manner described.

When a considerable column, consisting of several corps, is to form the line, the *guides généraux* are generally on the alignment, and if so, after halting, the commander, from behind the colour of the leading corps, will immediately correct on the distant point the bearer of it and *guide généraux* a-head, and then stepping in front of the latter and facing him, he, on that head one and colour bearer of the first, properly situates the colour bearer of the second, or next battalion; on these the adjutant-majors and adjutants instantly prolong the line, by posting the whole of the *guides généraux* and colour bearers, in the direction shown by these two colours a-head, which, so soon as completed, the guides of platoons are ordered on the line, and desired in taking post to be principally guided in their positions by the poles of the colours in front, while the bearers, to facilitate this covering, are directed to carry them perpendicularly between their eyes; as those latter *guides* are posted, the formation takes place in the regular progression detailed in the preceding.

Now lastly, were those *guides généraux* and colour bearers not on the line, and the alteration or correction required to demand their presence, the chief commander takes post in front, and after providing himself with a rear distant point, he

places those *guides* and the colour bearer of the leading corps in the designed *alignement*. Those of the second battalion immediately cover them, and the same markers of the following corps gain their stations, by taking post on the line determined by the two preceding colours; when the chief markers are thus produced, the platoon guides are brought between them, and a similar process to that explained, is repeated to effect the formation into line.

When the recovery of the line is to the reverse side (*fig.* 258), the French *Règlement* admits of inversion<sup>23</sup> by wheeling on the reverse flank, where pressed for time; but otherwise, points out the successive formation<sup>24</sup> as the appropriate evolution. Its execution does not materially differ from that of the British, a circumstance in which it is still unlike is in the divisions after wheeling, that are obliged to move up at least four paces to gain the *alignement*; this, by enabling those in rear, and on the march, to pursue their course behind those already formed, without relinquishing the straight advance, is not ill contrived.

In those instances of successive formation, and the rule equally applies to all cases where the divisions are not all at once produced on the *alignement*, but, as in the *echellon*, when fronting to the rear or in deploying, are made to move in turn on the line,

<sup>23</sup> F. R. *école de bataillon* 324, 328; *évolutions de ligne*, 133—136.

<sup>24</sup> F. R. successive formation, *école de peloton* 285—314; *école de bataillon*, 329—353; *évolutions de ligne*, 137—156.

two *jalonneurs*, both facing outwards,<sup>25</sup> are fixed on the line for the first or directing division, and so posted that one corresponds to the pivot or inward file, and the other to the second or third man of the outward flank of the same platoon. On those two, the outward guides of the remaining companies (the left if the movement be from the right, and the right guides if from the left) take post, by stepping out of the ranks and covering them as their divisions are halted, which, according to the French practice, is always when still at two paces short of the ground of occupation; the officers await till their guides are placed by the adjutant-major to dress their men, which they do each on the individual of his division (one of the three files of the outward flank), who closes upon his guide, and whose inward shoulder he grazes with his breast.

<sup>25</sup> The reason why it is directed in the French Reglement, to face those markers both outwards, and that in wheeling into line, the two serjeants, before the division at the point of *appui*, are made to face each other, is readily accounted for, from their being, both in the former case posted the first, and the serjeants, who afterwards move on the line, obliged to cover, and to take post on and by them; but as the outward serjeant of the front platoon when wheeling up, takes his station the last of all, he must naturally look towards the side he is to be regulated by in his own position. Were the line thus to be taken up somewhat oblique, points are to be provided for, and shewn to the second (and every other leader of division, as he successively heads the column in rear), to regain, while in progress, the parallel position to the alignement.

It may be here remarked, that the *guides généraux*, when unemployed, are in rear of the first and last platoons, to which they belong and in which they act as supernumeraries.



It is the adjutant who places the two *jalonneurs*, and the adjutant-major who in accompanying the movement situates the following guides, as they successively arrive on the line; this he performs by standing behind them.

In the performance of several corps, the adjutant majors of all the battalions, except the leading one, have, in addition to the duties explained, both to fix the right and left hand guides of their leading platoons which, in their corps, supply the want of *jalonneurs* merely allowed to the first or regulating battalion, and, in so doing, to provide for the directed interval of 20 mètres, ordered to separate the battalions. When this is performed by a general column of the line, the colour bearers, as in all successive formations, step out to the front to cover in the line of the guides so soon as the platoons to which they respectively belong take post. When two colours are so planted on the alignement, it is them which become the regulating points, and as the assistance of the guides of platoons may, therefore, be dispensed with, the battalion chiefs, each as his last division enters and completes the formation of his corps, directs his guides (as no longer necessary) to withdraw: the colour bearers, however, remain advanced until the whole column is on the line and formed, when by the command *drapeaux à vos places* (colours to your posts), delivered by the chief commander of the whole, they are also removed and to take their stations in the rank.

In the march in column, but more particularly when entering an *alignement*,<sup>26</sup> the adjutant-major steps with the leading division, and the adjutant with that in rear: the battalion chief rides outside of the line of direction; he is recommended to bestow particular attention to the regularity of the march, and the preservation of distances. The point of entry is marked, and two objects in front are given to or taken by the leading *guide* to direct his advance, and where no such objects present themselves, the adjutant-major of the leading corps is detached about 40 paces to the front, and in facing the head *guide* to assist him in determining his line of march, which, once ascertained, this guide may readily prolong, by constantly providing himself with two spots on the ground, to regulate his advance. When a battalion enters an *alignement* for the immediate purpose of forming into line, to secure still greater precision, the divisions in circling in, according as they perform to the reverse or to the pivot flank, wheel short or beyond the position to be taken up, so as to move on a line four paces distance from the same, and thereby, by clearing the former, leave it free for the *guides généraux* and colour-bearer, who step on it as their relative, first, last, and colour-platoons wheel in (*fig. 260*); of the two guides, the adjutant-major particularly superintends the march of that a-head and the adjutant of that in rear, both are to pay, besides, attention to see the divisions, particu-

<sup>26</sup> F. R. *école de bataillon*, 112—145.

larly the first and last, keep up the parallel position at about four paces from the line of formation. When no object in front is met with to direct the progress, three markers may supply this deficiency; the first accordingly takes post at the point of entry, the second at 300 or 400 paces beyond, and the third 300 or 400 paces still further. As the leading platoon wheels in, the first of those three leaves his station to remove 400 paces in rear of the third, and so does the second to take post in rear of the first, as the column draws near him; this, in rotation, is repeated by each of those markers as often as the column closes upon them. Where the number of battalions exceeds two, instead of foot markers, mounted officers and aids-de-camp are employed to perform this duty in front; when thus employed, they take post on the line horse length, and so that the horse and rider are both faced towards the arriving column; where a single object can be discovered a-head a single marker may suffice, and if so, be posted beyond the spot where the leading division is to halt. The battalion or general column on gaining its ground, is halted, and the regular process of correction, first, of the *guides généraux*, then of the *guides* of platoons, is attended to as before described, where, by wheeling up, the extended formation is to be retrieved.

This movement, in supplying the means of taking up the line *e f* (*fig. 258*), when it faces to *g* by wheeling to the reverse flank, as well as the line, *c d*, when it faces towards *h* by wheeling to the

-pivot side, and thus, besides the formation to either flank for two cases to the front, we shall proceed to the third, where the line *e f* is presented as facing to *h*, its former rear: if this be intended, and a battalion, for instance, right in front (*fig. 256*) is to form to the right, and to face the ground from whence it came<sup>27</sup> it will, when still at about a platoon distance from the new position, be arrested, and in conformity to the theory already produced for the successive formation, two *jalonneurs*, who both face outwards towards the point of *appui*, will be fixed for the leading division (*fig. 259*); that division is then faced to the right, and in file by a kind of counter-march moved round those markers, so as, when halted and fronted, to be situated about two paces beyond them; the two individuals of it corresponding to those two *jalonneurs* then move up with their breasts close to their outward arms, and thus display the line in which the platoon is immediately dressed. When the head platoon is posted, the others are likewise faced, filed, and marched to their respective stations on the *alignement*, which they gain by moving round, and about two paces beyond their respective outward *guides* (here the left ones) who, each as his division draws near, and is still at about 12 paces distance, moves on the line, and takes post by covering the *jalonneurs* and the guides already situated on the line. The rear platoons, as the first did, halt and front at

<sup>27</sup> F. R. *école de bataillon, face en arrière*, 371—385; *évolutions de ligne*, 172—183.

about two paces behind their positions, to facilitate the dressing which in each takes place again on the individual who stands opposite the *guide* (one of the three outward files), and who first closed upon him. When the line is completed, the chief, by the command *guides à vos places*, directs their removal from the front to regain their appropriate situations in the battalion. The same evolutions might equally apply to a column left in front, which takes up a position to the left and faces to the rear; nor is any further explanation needful were the execution extended to the column of the line, since the additional attention in the adjutant-majors of the battalions not a-head, to post their right and left hand *guides* for their leading divisions which are to replace the *jalonneurs*, and the particular of the colour-bearers, who all step out to the front and remain advanced till final completion, would merely here, as before mentioned, distinguish the performance. Were a column right in front now desired to remove to the ground on its left, and to face as before, which is the last case, and the same as that distinguished in the preceding by a formation executed on the head of the column, the movement corresponding to what we call oblique echelon, is, by the French, the expedient referred to.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>24</sup> *Ecole de bataillon*, 353—370; *évolutions de ligne*, 157, 171. It may be, however, observed here, that the divisions are not previously wheeled, but, in starting off, at the command *march*, gradually brought round so as to gain the required obliquity, which somewhat shortens the evolution.

Having thus far described the French modes of converting a column into the primitive position, where the manœuvre takes place from its head, it will readily recur, that where operating on the rear, the previous alteration in the front of the column, by the counter-march of divisions by files will suffice, and merely distinguish the manœuvres. It now remains to explain, however, the combined movements which are applied to complete the line when a central part of the ground is approached, and a centre division is operated upon ; the various cases this admits, the following examples drawn from their *Reglement*<sup>29</sup> will fully illustrate. Were, for instance, a general column to form the line on a central part, which, however, according to their system, must invariably be the rear division of a battalion, and is here supposed (*fig.* 261) to be the eighth of the third, two *jalonneurs* are fixed before it to determine the alignement, and the divisions in front are ordered to counter-march in file so as to face all that regulating ; the leading division of the fourth corps is, by the chief commander, brought in line with the eighth of the third, and as those preparatory arrangements are fulfilled, the formation of the line is accomplished by those à-head executing as it is explained where the line is formed so as to face to the former rear, and by those in rear as where it is to face to the front ; the

<sup>29</sup> F. R. *école de bataillon composée de deux mouvemens*, 386—392 ; *évolutions de ligne*, 184—209.

latter, of course, take up their positions by the oblique echelon, as may be seen in the figure, in which the particular movement of each battalion is likewise exhibited.

Were the same line now to be produced facing to the rear, the three head corps counter-march in divisions by files, and the chief commander then places the eighth platoon of the third battalion which heads those that have changed their front, in the line of the first of the fourth, which has likewise counter-marched, and from being here the one acted upon, has been previously fixed by the means of two *jalonneurs* in the true direction ; the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd battalions enter the alignment by the oblique echelon, while those behind that regulating take up their ground according to the peculiar movement explained (*fig. 259*) for the formation when facing to the former rear.

When such a column, right in front, is to gain its position by the rear, and it arrives by a central point, which is the next case to be produced, the head divisions enter by the successive wheel, and so perform, until that which is to take post at the spot executed by has circled into the alignment, at which period the column is halted. Those on the line wheel up, and those in rear move into their respective stations by the oblique echelon (*fig. 262*) ; and lastly, were the ground approached to the front of the new position but by a central point, the head battalions enter by the platoons successively wheeling in on the pivot flank till that to be

placed at the operating point, moves on the line; when the column is halted, those on the alignment wheel up, while those still in rear, gain their positions by the evolution directed for the formation, where the facing is to the former rear (*fig. 263*). Two observations, which will now conclude what refers to the French practice when converting a column into line, are, 1st, the difference it exhibits in the battalions which, when they separate from the general column individually to move to their ground, direct their course to the places their heads are to occupy instead of where their respective rear divisions are to be posted; 2nd, the application of the oblique echelon, which, in it, is preferred to the successive entry by the wheel of divisions.

The movements explained for the French are likewise used by the troops of the Netherlands; the trifling varieties they admit, merely derived from their formation, consist in the adjutants and under adjutants, who act with the latter as the adjutant-major and adjutants acts with the former, and in the interval of 40 feet instead of 20 mètres by which the battalions are separated.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>39</sup> R. I der N. wheeling pelotons school, 204—223; bataillons school, 112—145, and 325—334, also 216—227; linie evolution, 86—99; *inversie* bataillons school, 335—339; linie 135—138; *volgende formeringen* pelotons school, 285—314: bataillons school, 340—363; linie evolution, 139—158; echelon *trapswijze* bataillons school, 364—381; linie evolution, 159—173; *achterwaarts in bataille* bataillons school, 382—396; linie evolution, 174—185; by combined movements, bataillons school, 397—403; linie evolution 186—211.



The Prussians, in those instances of formation, assimilate nearer to the British; yet, a point in which they differ and draw closer to the French is in their platoon officers, who, in wheeling up, instead of taking the advanced position before the front, to place their men in the line, repair at once to their posts on the right, and from thence, while standing in the ranks, dress their platoons. Their manner of ascertaining and prolonging the line for their successive formation, is, likewise, by two under officers posted in front of the leading division, and by a serjeant of every following division, who steps out of the ranks to cover the two first situated at platoon distance, which, by the Field Exercise and Evolutions, has, likewise, been adopted in the British Infantry.<sup>21</sup>

In speaking of the Austrians, we may premise what belongs to their formation into line, by the remark, that whether the movement be to the front, to the rear, or on any of the central parts, and whether the facing be as the column, or to the contrary side, the object is to be obtained by either the movement they distinguish by the name of *deplorung* (an evolution somewhat similar to our oblique echelon), or by the operation we call to deploy; and that, where on the spot the column is to convert into line towards either flank

<sup>21</sup> P. R. absch iii. kapt. viii. § 3, 4, and 5.

<sup>22</sup> The Prussians have also a formation not unlike the oblique echelon, both to the front and to the rear; the platoons do not wheel, but after the men have taken up an half face, they at once incline into their new stations.

it is to wheel up, or to refer to the successive formation, according as the line is to be presented to the pivot or reverse side.

The evolution called *deplöirung*, which, as we have already mentioned, corresponds to our oblique echelon, a view of *fig.* 264 will fully illustrate;<sup>33</sup> and as the Austrian mode of deploying will be examined in the subsequent pages, we shall confine ourselves for the present to the few variations their mode of wheeling up and execution of the successive formation present, from the general practice of the European infantries, particularly the British.

In the completion of the line by wheeling up;<sup>34</sup> the command which concludes the circular motion with us, *halt—dress*, is not heard, and the wheeling men are to halt by themselves, that of the leading division as he sees himself in line with the pivots, and those of the remaining, when they arrive beside their next neighbours fixed on the line.

<sup>33</sup> A. R. haupt. ii. absch. iii. § 5. This movement consists of a compound motion that partakes of the oblique march, and of a trifling wheel performed by the means of the inward flank-man in every division, who steps short the two or three first paces: this movement is liable to a front, a rear, as well as a central execution, but cannot be performed above the extent of a regiment; several of them may, however, by taking first post on the line separately and in a contiguous line of columns, afterwards thus conclusively operate by themselves; when an *alignement* is thus taken up, the divisions, as they arrive at about two paces from the line, receive the command *gerad aus* (forwards) to enter square into their positions. This movement, while at *Saverne* in Alsace, I have seen executed with great precision by a battalion of the Hungarian regiment of *Giukey*.

<sup>34</sup> A. R. for the wheelings, haupt. ii. absch. iii. § 3.

Where the front of the column amounts to that of division (two companies) the circular march is done away with, and supplied by the whole facing and forming up to the front by files. It is also specified that, in the event of incorrectness in the distances, chasms are to be filled up by the men of the second rank, who move into the first, and by those of the third who complete the second rank; and that a want of room is to be remedied by the files, on the wheeling flank, that are to fall back behind the rear rank, and there to remain with their arms ordered, until they can come up again.

In the successive formation,<sup>25</sup> the wheels are executed on a moveable pivot, and taken in the cadence in which the column previously pursued its march. The circular is so performed that the divisions may still step forwards ten paces to the front, before they gain their places on the alignment (*fig.* 265): where local circumstances intervene, and prevent this advance, supernumeraries are enjoined to remain in the ranks till the rear of the column has passed. Where the front amounts to that of division, the formation by files is again adopted instead of circling over the arch. It is additionally mentioned, that a column, at half distance, may, by the same process, recover the primitive position, without opening out. When several battalions so operate, the battalion chiefs of those in rear, have additionally to shew, each to

<sup>25</sup> For the successive formation, haupt. ii. absch. iii. § 4, page 87.

his own leading division the spot at which it is to rest.<sup>36</sup>

In the Danish infantry, the platoon leaders do not take post in the centre of their commands, when ordered to wheel into line, but remain on the pivot flank, which is the position assigned to them when marching on the *alignement*, in order to form; and while the men run over the arch, they either step or face so as to have gained their appropriate posts on the right at conclusion. From thence, they both halt and dress their own platoons, if the motion has been to the left, but they perform those duties with that on their right, when the motion has been to the right. This by conveying the officer immediately into his proper situation, is deemed favourable as conducive to dispatch.

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#### SECTION IV.

##### *Formation of the Line from close Column.— Deployment.*<sup>37</sup>

As the close column may, at all times, assume the open formation by the divisions regaining the

<sup>36</sup> The Austrians have also a formation (A. R. haupt. ii. absch. xiii, § 4), which is employed when on the head division, the line is to be presented towards the reverse side of the column, and the column to face to the rear; when so the *züge* take post by the oblique march *deplöirung*, and the first as the third is formed, wheels the semicircle, to alter its front to the rear, which motion is taken up by those following, and by each performing it, as the next, which took post before it on the line, has completed its circular evolution.

<sup>37</sup> R. and R. deployment of the close column into line, § 144,

proper wheeling distance, after this additional preparation, any of the operations named in the preceding may avail in the recovery of the line; but should the extended position be offered, without the compact situation being relinquished, the peculiar movement distinguished by the appellation of deployment must be referred to.

This movement, from its contrary tendency to that detailed for the construction of the close column from line, and intention to undo what was done by the latter, bears great analogy to it, for the same ground is trodden over to unravel the parts of the mass which, on formation, was traced out to heap them together in each other's rear, and although in a contrary direction, the divisions move not altogether in a dissimilar manner in file separately.

145, 146, 148, 149, 150; oblique deployment, § 151, 152, 153, part iv. § 181, close column of the line, § 187, 188, 191, 193; M. and P. attention covering serjeant, musick attention in platoon commanders, adjutant, command. officer, B. of G. O. No 38. The deployments were first performed in 1748, in the Prussian army (Warnery on Guibert). At the first introduction, they were executed by a column of the line, on the principle of that of the battalion, but considerable inconvenience having arisen from it, the deployments in mass were substituted and made to precede the ultimate intention of extending into line (*Mauvillon in appendice of Mirabeau's Monarchie Prussienne*, explanation of plate 35). This movement, says Guibert, was, when first brought over to France, called *l'ordre du tiroir* (*Essai général de tactique infanterie*, chap. ix. § 2), from the resemblance it was conceived to bear to the opening of the drawers of a chest.

As the deployment may take place on any of the successive parts of the column, the future line facing, as the column did before, or to the contrary way; for a battalion of eight companies, it admits of sixteen unlike cases, yet as hardly any variety in performance arises, and the only differences which any way distinguish the evolution, merely result from the corps which operates on a head, a rear, or central division, we shall confine our attention to those three particulars.

When it takes place on the front division, the apprizal delivered,<sup>30</sup> a distant point of dress (z fig. 266), is immediately provided for, and when obtained, the head division is ordered to stand fast, while the remaining are directed to face to the right or to the left, and always to the pivot side; when so situated in file, they are put in motion by the word *quick-march*; the platoon leader of the second division, at the last command, takes a side step to allow his men to proceed, and the instant he sees his rear file in the act of passing him, he halts and fronts them, speedily dresses his company, and gives the word *march*, to move it straight forwards into its situation on the alignement; and stepping himself on the inner, while his serjeant

<sup>30</sup> The caution is here *the battalion will form line' on the front division* (at this the officer of the leading division shifts his flank), *front division', stand fast, remaining right (or left)—face, quick-march*; successively by the field officers or platoon leaders *halt—front*, and then by the latter *dress—march*, and *halt—dress eyes—front*.

remains on the outward flank, as he approaches the line at about five or six paces, he leaves his company to take post before the first, second, or third outward file of the preceding division, which is already placed, and as he observes his men just in the act of joining the line, he delivers the command *halt—dress*, and after effecting his correction on the distant point, finally gives the word *eyes—front* when he takes post on the right. As the second platoon officer halted and fronted his division, the leader of the third took likewise a side step, to permit his men to go on, and when the last file passes him, he, in the like manner, delivers the commands *halt—front, dress*, dresses his men, moves them up, and performs as explained for the second. This is successively repeated by every platoon commander, who each takes a side step and halts himself to see his men file by, as the division in his front is arrested, and then executes in the regular process described. The covering serjeant, who continues to lead the files when his officer has stopped his motion, is naturally brought on the outward flank; there he remains till the company is properly placed in the alignement, when, on being relieved by his own officer, or that of the next division,<sup>39</sup> he returns to his station on the right, to

<sup>39</sup> When the movement is from the left and to the right, as the serjeants stand on the right they will be relieved by their own officers, but if it be from the right and to the left, as they are posted on the left and occupy the places not of their own leaders, but of those of the division on their left, they will be relieved by the latter,

cover his platoon leader. In the execution of this movement, attention must be bestowed, while in file, to preserve the heads of the divisions dressed on that the nearest to the line, which, as they in turn, become so, is to be viewed as directing the flank march; and while the divisions move up to the alignment for formation, to check the outward files from pushing forwards which, by obscuring the distant point, might delay the dressing (*fig. 266*)<sup>40</sup>

Should this be performed on the rear division, at the caution, a serjeant of the same is dispatched to take post before and close to the pivot flank of the leading company to display the line of formation (*fig. 267*); and while the rear stands fast, the other divisions are directed to face, which is here invariably to the reverse side, to which flank the platoon officers and their serjeants must also shift to lead their men.<sup>41</sup> The divisions which have faced, move off at the word *quick—march*, at which the officer of that immediately preceding the last,

after they have dressed their men; on being displaced, those serjeants, of course, return to their stations on the right, where they cover their officers in the rear rank.

<sup>40</sup> The formation will here be much facilitated by the outward flank being even somewhat refused, as the men will then rapidly, but successively, come on the line, which will much promote the dressing, and shorten its duration.

<sup>41</sup> The cautions and commands when performing on a rear division are, as follows: *the battalion will form line on the rear division, rear division stand fast, remaining right (or left)—face, quick—march* then by field officers or platoon leaders *halt—front*, and by the latter *dress—march*, and when on the line, *halt—dress, eyes—*



takes a side step so as to clear his company, and to face its rear rank; as his men proceed he halts and fronts them the instant he sees his last file has moved by, he then dresses his division, marches it up when cleared in front (he himself stepping on the inward flank, while his serjeant is on the outward), he leaves his flank, as mentioned where it occurs on the front, when his division approaches the alignment, to take a similar position to that explained before the outward flank of the division; which, in rear while in column, has just now preceded him on the line, and from its outward files, halts his men and dresses them on the distant point. This is successively repeated by every platoon chief, who steps nimbly round the rear rank to allow his division to proceed, as he hears that in his rear, receive the injunction to *halt-front*, and then in succession operates as directed.

It still remains to explain that the last division, so soon as disengaged in front, is to march up at the command *march* of its leader, and on its reaching the serjeant, sent forwards at the caution, to be halted by his platoon officer, and dressed from the same serjeant on the distant point; thence it takes up the identical ground before occupied by the leading division.

The circumstance of the serjeant, who remains on *front*. When deploying on the rear, the officers, in order to lead their files, are to shift their flank as their companies face to the reverse side.

the outward flank, as well as that of his being relieved when on the line are alike as in the preceding evolution on the front. It may, however, be remarked, that the line of march, for every division, after fronting, to gain its position in the alignment, decreases where the formation is on the rear, in proportion as it joins the latter on the line, and as this is inducive to counteract the regular order, in which the divisions should successively appear, attention becomes incumbent in the platoon leaders not to hurry their entry by rushing forwards, but to await till those on the directing side, by the position of which they are to be guided in their own, have taken post, before they attempt to step into the alignment. Yet, in thus explaining the regular arrival of the divisions in turn, it is not intended to justify delay, which is here neither necessary nor admissible; provided they do not run altogether on the line, but preserve the gradual succession, this is all which is here required. It is true, that in some regiments I have seen the preceding division most critically dressed, and even the words *eyes-front*, delivered by its officer, before the next was permitted to show itself on its sides on the line; and that upwards of two minutes were thus literally lost, for the posting of every division, but this, like many other instances which might be produced, is a striking proof of the serious evils resulting from the absence of theory, and deficiency in drill; since an acquaintance with the principles of the first would, by impressing on the mind the importance of speediness in the com-

pletion of so momentous an operation as the formation, obviate so gross a misapplication of the rules, while a little more attention to the latter would have qualified the individual to be somewhat quicker in taking up his position.

It must be observed, that when so deploying, the commands to *halt* and *front*, while filing by divisions, are preferably to be given by field officers.

Those deployments are, likewise, susceptible of a central formation, and, when so required, derived from the combined execution of the two evolutions just described. The divisions in rear accordingly perform as explained where the movement is on the front company, and those in front as where it occurs in rear. At the caution, which signifies the regulating division, a serjeant of it is sent forwards, and posted next to the pivot officer of the leading platoon, to mark the spot its own pivot is to arrive at; two distant objects, y z (*fig. 268*), are ascertained for the correction of the dress, the divisions, except that of formation, are then faced, those in front to the reverse flank, and those in rear to the pivot side, by the command *outwards-face*, and by the word *quick-march* put in motion; every division is, in turn, halted and fronted by a mounted officer, or, in his absence, by his own platoon commander, who dresses his men, gives the word *march*, advances them into the alignment, there again halts and dresses them, and finally, utters the word *eyes-front*, when he himself takes his appropriate post on the right.

Were any of those operations required so that the line faces to the contrary way and former rear, the column would, in the first instance, have to change its front by the countermarch of companies by files;<sup>42</sup> and after effecting this, perform on any of its divisions as mentioned.

To render the execution of those deployments still more familiar, the following general rules are submitted as a further guidance :

*First*, The divisions are invariably to face to the pivot side when in rear, and to the reverse side when in front of that of direction, and always to the left when they are to take post to the left, and to the right when they are to take post to the right of that performed upon.

*Second*, When joining on the line, the dressing is from the right when the formation is from the right, and from the left when the formation is from the left.

*Third*, Where the formation is on a right division, after halting and fronting, and while advancing into the line, the platoon officer stands on the right of his division, and his covering serjeant on the left; but he stands on the left and his serjeant on the right when a left division regulates the movement.

*Fourth*, In all central formations, the divisions in front of that acted upon perform as when the execution is on the rear division, and those in rear as when it is accomplished on the front division.

<sup>42</sup> Chap. vi. § 11.

This movement, from being liable to an execution either on the front or rear division, may throw a line to either hand (*fig.* 266, 267), and where a central position is desired to be occupied, the intention is readily fulfilled by the application of a central operation; but, under all those cases, the line taken up is that on which the head of the column stood previous to formation; whenever the leading division is consequently not acted upon, the one so named must, so soon as cleared in its front, march up to take post on that line.

Where this is not attended to, and the division of formation is permitted to remain stationary in its original position, whenever the head is not regulated by, the whole of those preceding in column must gain their ground to the rear. This tends to intricacy in the performance, and would be unsafe in the presence of an enemy, as the men would be obliged to turn their backs while they marched to their positions on the *alignement*.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>43</sup> Guibert, in his *Essai Général de Tactique* (vol. i. *Infanterie*, chap. ix. § 2), describes the line taken up in deploying, to be that in the prolongation of the division formed upon, which stands fast; consequently, when it does not take place on the leading platoon, all those in front must gain their positions on the *alignement*, by marching to the rear. As his intention was evidently here to illustrate the Prussian Tactics, this, as well as several other assertions of his, not concordant to that system, have subjected him to a severe reply, which, under the head of "Remarques sur l'Essai Général de Tactique," was inserted in the *Journal Littéraire* of Berlin, 1772.

A circumstance which still demands discussion, is why the field officers are directed while deploying, where no other duties intervene, to arrest and front the divisions while in file? This appearing superfluous, since the platoon chiefs, by stopping at the inward flank, are already seemingly so properly situated, to cease the progress of their respective companies; but the reason of this is plain, and easily deduced from the latter officers being merely able to judge for their own divisions, and not capable of correcting mistakes like the field officers, who, in superintending the whole, may, by quickening or delaying the delivery of their command to a next division, counteract the error of a preceding. Where, in a central performance, the divisions diverge to both sides and only one field officer can thus be spared, he is, according to the late Rules and Regulations, to attend in preference to the halting of those in front of the directing division."

That he himself discovered, afterwards, the defect of those rear deployments seems evident from his not having introduced them in the French *Reglement* of 1791, chiefly of his compilation; I have, however, observed some French battalions still practising them, and it is the regular mode of operating in the Austrian infantry. By the F. E. and E. those rear deployments are likewise sanctioned.

"This is accounted for in the position of the platoon leaders of those divisions in front, who, from being to the rear of their men are not deemed so favourably situated to perform that duty as those of the divisions in rear, who, to the front of their companies, have a better view of the line and general movement.

Although these deployments are not inclined to favour an advance during process,<sup>45</sup> they do not exclude motion to a side; yet, when it thus occurs under the influence of the flank march, the execution is restricted to a front or rear performance, and always limited to that flank, which, of the two first, arrives at or opposite its ground. When the motion is, therefore, to the right, the deployment must be to the right and on the left platoon, but it must be to the left and on the right platoon when the march is to the left. This performance while on the march, exclusive of its immediate advantage to enable a mass to take up a line in the prolongation of its former ground, is of a constant application in the column of the line, as it is the mode in which all the battalions except that operated upon, manœuvre, when, by the deployment, a considerable mass is to retrieve the primitive position (*fig. 273*).

The front, from 30 to 40 files, is commonly considered as that the most congenial to this movement, as, without creating the embarrassment a greater number would be apt to produce, it is calculated to decrease the depth, which a less number of files would leave too considerable. Nor has this principle been neglected, since the divisions are gene-

<sup>45</sup> There is, however, one instance in which those deployments are less unfrequent while in motion, namely, where, on the march in line, the divisions which have been thrown momentarily back, on account of intervening impediments, are, as they cease and the ground widens again, to resume their proper positions on the line.

rally, in consequence of it, coupled to the front of grand divisions as a preparative to the formation into line. Thence it is the deployment of a column, under the latter construction, which will become the most frequent evolution, but when referred to, it will be conducted on the rules precedently elucidated. The grand division of formation is announced, and, if not the leading one, marched up to the line as soon as disengaged in front (*fig. 269*); the others are faced to the pivot or reverse flank according as they stand in its rear or in its front, and stepping off at the word *quick—march*, move by their flank till opposite their ground, where, as each arrives in turn, it is halted and fronted by a mounted officer, or, in his absence, by its inward platoon chief,<sup>46</sup> who, whether he halted it himself or not, always afterwards successively delivers the words *dress, march*, and when on the alignment, *halt—dress*, arranges his men from the point of *appui* (or any of the three outward files of the preceding acting as such) to the distant object, gives the word *eyes—front*, and returns to his post on the right of his company; to which position (on the right of his own), the outward officer, if not already there, likewise removes. Thus successively arrested in their motion, the

<sup>46</sup> As both flanks are here provided with officers, the leading one does not stop to see his men pass by, but remains in front to lead, and leaves the care of halting and fronting the grand division; when no field officer takes that duty, to the inward officer, who steps in rear.



grand divisions are gradually brought on the alignment.<sup>47</sup>

When the movement is performed by grand divisions, the officer on the outward flank, whether he be the senior or not, gives no commands: the principle of this manœuvre, as well as its regular execution, requiring these immediately to proceed from the pivot side, he, therefore, now acts with the grand division in the same manner the serjeant does when the line is taken up by companies; he, accordingly, during the progress to the front to join the alignment, keeps his neighbouring files rather to the rear, in order to promote the rapid succession in which they are to appear and to be stationed on the line, and if posted on the left, awaits for the words *eyes—front*, to recover his proper situation on the right of his company.

<sup>47</sup> The commands, when deploying by grand-division on the front, are—*form line on the front grand-division, right (or left) face, quick—march*, and then successively, *second, third, fourth, &c. grand-division halt—front*, and by the inward platoon leader, *march, halt—dress, eyes—front*; when on the rear, the caution is equally delivered and followed by the command *rear grand-division stand fast—remaining right (or left) face, quick—march*, and in turn as opposite their ground—*grand-division halt front*, when, as before, the inward platoon leader repeats, in succession, the words *dress, march, halt—dress, and eyes—front*. On its being announced, *the battalion will form line on the second (or any central) grand-division*, it is followed by the words *outwards face, quick—march, and halt front*, to arrest, in turn, the grand divisions, which are then dressed and brought on the alignment by the inward platoon leaders, who repeat the commands above specified.

The supernumeraries, who, in rear, follow the motion of the column, stop the instant they hear the grand division they belong to arrested in its advance, and, so soon as those still on the march, and which are moving between them and their companies, clear the front, they join and take post at their appropriate distance of three paces from the rear rank.

Those deployments which hitherto have been viewed as unfolding the column into a parallel position, and in the prolongation of the line on which the head stands, are not so immediately restrained to the direct as not to admit of the oblique formation. When thus desired, the operation must, however, be confined to the leading division, which, as the new alignment is advanced or retired, is then wheeled forwards on its reverse or on its pivot flank. Beginning with the first case, where the line is advanced, the head division is first circled into its new situation on the reverse flank (*fig. 270*), a distant point *z* is immediately fixed upon, and the remaining platoons are faced and moved by their flank, but, while on the march, directed to incline so as to have gained the parallel position, or nearly so, before they are halted and fronted. Crowding on the neighbouring division, the fault to which those oblique movements betray a tendency, must be carefully repressed.

When the line is retired, the front division wheels likewise forwards, but on the pivot flank (*fig. 271*), and the rest perform as before, with the exception

that they now gain ground to the rear instead of to the front ; this, however, is an unfavourable feature, not calculated to alleviate the execution. The difficulty may here still, in a great measure, be obviated, if the head division be permitted to step a few paces forwards previous to its being removed into the new line: where practicable, this, of course, should not be neglected.

Another method of effecting the same purpose of removal into an oblique alignment is, by the divisions, which all at once wheel either forwards on their pivots or reverse flanks (*fig. 272*) ; this, by altering their positions, without influencing the relative and parallel situations in which they stood before, will assimilate the movement to that where a direct alignment is converted into, from which the performance afterwards presents no deviation. This latter manner, by allowing the straight march to be preserved during process, pleads eligibility, and besides, provides for the circumstances of a rear a central, as well as a front execution, since, from the two former, no increased difficulty is to be apprehended : yet, it must be allowed, that the advantage of permitting general performance is here trifling, as the use of those oblique deployments are almost confined to the movement of one, two, or three battalions to the utmost, which, in taking up an inclined line, are thus thrown forward to turn an enemy's wing, or refused to cover a flank, and their execution will, therefore, seldom or never recur but under the restriction of a head formation. Of

those two motions, the first is that enjoined by our late Rules and Regulations ; the latter is proposed by Major Werkamp, of the Wirtemberg service.<sup>48</sup>

We will now conclude by observing, that a close column, to form line to the pivot side, must first open out at complete distance, and then wheel up ; and that, where the line is to be presented to the reverse flank, the successive formation becomes the suitable evolution ; in the latter instance, the necessity for the divisions to recover the original distances does no longer exist, their compact position, while moving in rear, not interfering with the execution, nor with their progressive appearance on the alignment.

### *Of the Line.*

Three modes present themselves to recover the extended and primitive position from a column of the line : for it might, in the first instance, operate on the same principle and in the same manner as a battalion, on any of its divisions (*fig. 273*) ; 2nd, as a preparative, precedently deploy by corps, or, as it is denominated in mass, so as to stand in a contiguous line of battalion columns (*fig. 274*), previous to ultimate formation ; and 3rd, either

<sup>48</sup> Werkamp's *Versuch, &c. zur Ausübung der taktik. Schiefe oder schräge linie zu deployren*, page 474 (*fig. 109, 110*). To take up an inclined position it will still generally be preferable to wheel the column so as to stand perpendicularly to the new alignment, and to extend afterwards in the ordinary way.

from a general column, or from a contiguous line of battalions in masses, march by corps to a distant position displayed by the adjutants, who, dispatched in time, have taken posts on the designed *alignement* (*fig.* 275, 276).

When the first of these expedients is preferred, and the evolution retains the complexion of that detailed for the battalion, the chief commander, after declaring the division of formation, faces the remaining to the right, or to the left, or outwards, as may be required, and putting them on the march, leaves to the battalion chiefs and platoon officers, the care of halting and placing them successively on the line, which they then accomplish in the manner already described. It must, however, be remarked that, properly speaking, it is merely the battalion to which the division performed upon belongs, which manœuvres as before, since the others, to gain their removed situations, are obliged to march by the flank, and, from this circumstance, restrained to a front or rear execution on that of the two divisions, by which the position is first approached, as *fig.* 273 will fully illustrate.

It is almost needless to remind, that the separating space directed as an interval, must be preserved from the preceding corps. Adjutants, as heretofore, mark the outward flank of their battalions; a person may, however, be also planted at the inward and nearest spot to the general point of *appui*.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>49</sup> The advantage of promptitude, which so decidedly belongs to

**When a considerable column advances with the intention of deploying, it generally, before the**

all central formations of the line from column, has erroneously led to the supposition that this favourable feature in the performance might be secured by a peculiar construction, in which the centre division was constantly to lead the column. M. de Mesnil Durant has, accordingly, in his *Système François*, suggested that the centre division forming the head, the succession should alternately run afterwards to both flanks (*fig. 169*), and much extolled the excellence of this position, which he conceived, to provide for a quicker and a safer recovery of the line, benefits which amply compensate, he added, for the defect of inversion which he admitted it betrayed: that those pretended advantages were mere delusions, has already been illustrated, chap. vii. § 2.

Yet the columns are there supposed to have reached their ground by the very centre, which is the most favourable circumstance of the central mass, for, had they arrived at any other part, which, considering the battalion to be of eight companies, is, however, in the proportion of seven to one, every disadvantage will appear on the side of De Mesnil's column, which, as it must first repair to the middle of the position before it can unfold, will be subjected to delay, to unnecessary fatigue, and, if in presence of an enemy, to additional and considerable exposure.

Thus defective for the battalion, this central construction of the column, will, however, be found still more so, when adapted to the line, as will be observed by taking a view of *fig. 288*, in which it will appear, that of the six battalions so thrown into columns, and represented to arrive by the right of the position, the three on the right to gain the centre of the line, the exclusive point of operation, are compelled to move over the unnecessary ground (a b), to return afterwards for deployment to the very spot from whence they came, and this general defect be partially repeated again in every corps, which, in repairing to its own centre point of operation, will also have to carry its inward wing (the left in the battalions on the right, and the right of those on the left), over the same track it is after-

head arrives on the alignement, contrives to stand in a close column of grand divisions. The companies, therefore, when still at a suitable distance, first move up to half or quarter distance, then in-

wards to retrace when extending into line. That such a movement is faulty and opposes every principle of sound theory is obvious, and although the unfolding of a close column is no evolution to be performed within reach of an unfriendly army, and still less within its effect of musketry, since the hypothesis is drawn in support of those central formations, admitting its possibility and considering the manœuvre to take place under such a circumstance, it appears surprising how the dangerous exposure which must be derived from half the general column stepping up and down over half the ground, and the half of the divisions in every battalion except the leading one, which are afterwards separately subjected to the same inconvenience and loss of fire sustained by it, could have escaped notice, and permitted so defective a measure to be ever proposed and obtruded upon the system.

But were the column not to approach the position by its centre, or an oblique line to be taken, circumstances within possibility, fresh difficulties would arise; I shall now refer to *fig. 273*, which exhibits the movement on the right battalion according to the mode enjoined, and observe, how, divested of all those objections, its simplicity and regularity must strike and deserve to be appreciated when compared with the monstrous execution shown in *fig. 288*. In this note I have chiefly followed the excellent arguments of Count Guibert against the central column, as mentioned in his *Défense du système de guerre* (vol. i. part i. chap. v. Observations on the ninth manœuvre).

Were the impropriety of dwelling on an obsolete question, now no longer the object of discussion, suggested, in vindication, I have to advance, that as the thought which rose once may rise again, the reasons which at former periods have secured the science from the inroads of error should not be so neglected as to escape memory, since, if not of immediate use for the present, their want may still be felt to repel any future attempt of intrusion.

crease their front so as to double it to grand divisions, and finally close up. Where the whole of this can be accomplished antecedently to arrival on the position, and no time be lost to obtain it, like the vessel which sails with wind and tide in its favour, it is the evolution presented under its most favourable aspect, since, while the execution is facilitated by acting under the most eligible front, it will, from the reduced depth it presents, also offer less exposure to the artillery, and from standing so compact, favour deception both as to the number of combatants and the final disposition in which the mass is to be presented when extended: but, although this manner, as represented in *fig. 273*, is simple, and much sheltered under the analogy which it presents between the movement of the line and that of the battalion, it is unsuitable to numbers, and, on account of the time it requires as well as open space it demands for performance, such as to be rarely eligible and frequently impracticable.<sup>50</sup>

The corps will, therefore, more generally, according to the second method, deploy in the first instance in mass (*fig. 274*); when this is meant, the general column is closed, the caution is heard to deploy on a named battalion, the adjutants immediately gallop on the line to mark the spots where

<sup>50</sup> According to the French, four battalions, and according to the British, three battalions are the utmost number allowed to extend at once on the principle of the single battalion, without precedently deploying in mass.



their respective corps are to rest, and, while the battalion appointed to regulate stands fast, the others are faced to the right, to the left, or outwards,<sup>41</sup> and put in motion by the word *quick—march*, delivered by the chief commander, to operate by corps as they before did in divisions. The regulating battalion, of course, if not the leading one, when cleared in front, advances on the original line, and the others, which gain their ground by the flank march are, in succession, halted and fronted by their own commanders, and by them brought up to their adjutants, who, in the prolongation of the position displayed by the directing mass, mark their inner flanks.\*

<sup>41</sup> When deploying in mass, the chief commander gives the word *right—face*, when to the right, the movement is on the left battalion; he gives the word *left—face*, when to the left, it is on the right battalion and *outwards—face* when central, those in front and in rear have to diverge and march in a contrary direction; the commands are here according to the late Rules and Regulations, § 187, and Major Palmer on the same section, by the chief *the column will close to quarter distance* (repeated along the line and complied with by battalion commanders), *form close column* (repeated along the line, &c.) and when accomplished still by the chief *the column will deploy in mass on the third* (for instance) *from the front* (repeated by generals of brigades), *outwards—face* (repeated by generals of brigades), *quick—march* (repeated by generals of brigades), then by battalion commanders, *halt—front dress* (except by the commander of the third battalion who only says *march, halt—dress*), and then *march, halt—dress*; by the chief again *form grand-divisions* (repeated by generals of brigades, and complied with by the battalion and platoon officers, who give the words the evolution implies), *the column will close to the front*,

The distance to be kept between the battalions is here six paces, if the front have already extended to that of grand divisions, but if not, the additional space for a company is to be added to those six paces, to provide afterwards for this increase and doubling of front.<sup>52</sup>

In this manœuvre musick, drummers, &c. follow their battalion in rear, which place is likewise affixed to the artillery, unless particular arrangements direct to the contrary.

*march* (repeated by generals of brigades), *the line will deploy on the third grand division of the third battalion* (repeated by generals of brigades; any other grand division might equally be selected) *outwards—face* (repeated by generals of brigades), *quick—march* (repeated by generals of brigades); the battalion commanders, or field officers, successively halt and front their own grand divisions, and inward platoon leaders dress and march them up and place them on the alignment.

<sup>52</sup> In deploying in mass from general column, the battalions operate, in the British infantry, on the front of companies instead of grand divisions. The reason alleged for this is, that from being more flexible and easier managed, a column of the former description presents, while in motion, greater facility for performance than the latter, as, on the other hand, however, it places troops under a greater exposure from greater depth, and some delay is experienced on the line when those contiguous masses are afterwards to double their front to that of grand division, it seems on the whole doubtful whether it be not preferable as customary by the French, to effect the increase to the front of two platoons, before the general column separates to deploy into battalion masses.

The late Rules and Regulations varied somewhat in their directions respecting the intervals to be left betwixt those battalion columns, as in part iv. § 187, they were explained to be equal to half a company, and under the head of close column of the line

While the masses are thus in a contiguous line, the final operation of extending into an alignment might be readily completed on any of the divisions of any of the battalions. If so desired, the corps formed upon executes as explained where single, and the others proceed by the flank march to their positions, there to unfold either on the front or rear division, that of the two which the first reaches its ground. The adjutants, as already mentioned, take post on the line to mark each the outward flank of his battalion, which is the farthest from the general point of *appui*. In the execution of this movement, a practical rule deserving notice is, for the head divisions here already on the alignment, while the masses march by their flank, to be cautious not to overshoot, but to keep rather to the rear of the line of formation.

When deploying in mass, as well as when the formation into line is ultimately effected, the general directions for the battalions *to face*, and to step off, *quick-march*, are to be delivered by the chief commander of the whole, while those by which each corps is afterwards *halted*, *fronted*, and in mass brought up on the line, as well as those

fixed to six paces: I have adopted the latter as determining the object, which the other does not; it has been equally invariably preferred by Major Palmer and Major Cuninghame, as may be observed throughout their works, six paces is also the space specified to separate the masses in the French *Règlement* and in the *Field Exercise and Evolutions*, part v. § 136, No. 5.

when the extended position is ultimately taken up, by which the divisions are each successively arrested and fronted, are all to be given by the battalion commanders, each to his respective corps. In the latter case, the advance of the fractional parts upon the alignment, and the proper stationing of them, devolve on the platoon leaders.

This manœuvre is still susceptible of greater expedition, if the battalions be permitted, so soon as half or quarter distance be gained, to diverge at once to their adjutants, who, dispatched in time, are posted in readiness for reception; the divisions while thus on the march may both form grand divisions and close up.

The favourable circumstances attending a line of battalions in mass (*fig. 274*) are readily enumerated, since, in offering merely one-fourth of the front,<sup>53</sup> the body is easily managed as well as its motions easily overlooked; moreover, without betraying into the inconvenience of a complete extension, it leaves the commander, by being partly unfolded, sufficiently prepared against unforeseen attacks. Besides, while those advantages are procured, the battalions, from being already posted on the line, are in readiness for final formation, an operation much shortened by it, and which, as three-fourths of the whole may be thrown to either

<sup>53</sup> This supposes the battalions to consist of eight companies and four grand divisions; it was a fifth when they were of ten companies.

flank, leaves also the disposition unknown until nearly completed. That by a line of masses a distant ground may likewise be easily occupied, will appear from the elucidation of the third mode of operating to which we are now going to proceed.

The third movement, of which it still remains to speak, is where the corps either from a general column (*fig. 275*), or, while already deployed in mass (*fig. 276*), diverge to proceed separately to their adjutants, who, sent forward, have taken up a distant position, by marking each the rear of his own battalion. Suppose this to recur from contiguous masses, and from it the evolution of a general column will be readily deduced, the point of *appui* is first fixed upon, and the adjutants are moved on the line (*fig. 276*), the battalions then direct their course to the latter, and the divisions, as they open out during progress, wheel successively in, as explained where the alignment is entered by the rear of the position.<sup>54</sup> Were the new line such as to demand the adjutants to mark the left (and which must be the case whenever the formation is from the right), while the left was leading on the march, the battalion close columns must perform a change of wings, by the counter-march of divisions from the rear, in order to place the right a-head. When this is the case, the divisions will

<sup>54</sup> The battalions, instead of proceeding to their adjutants posted on the rear of their positions, may likewise move to the ground their heads are to remain, and manœuvre accordingly.

preferably open out while in the process of this latter evolution, and perform it as they quit the old for the new ground.

Although in the present, as in most instances when operating in line, a central directing point may reasonably be urged as conducive to dispatch, by providing both for a speedier and an easier evolution, the circumstance of a flank properly covered will frequently intervene in practice, and remove the point of *appui* to one of the extremities of the position; should, therefore, the right wing be nominated to guide, the adjutants will have to mark the left flanks of their corps (*a fig. 277*), which accordingly enter the *alignement* right in front; and were the left to direct the general motion, as the adjutants would be removed and fixed where the right of their corps are intended to remain, *c*, the battalions would have to move on the line, in columns left in front. Should, however, a central point instead of a flank be selected to regulate the manœuvre, the corps on the right, as well as their adjutants, would have to attend to the particulars enumerated as necessary, when the movement is performed from the left, whereas those on the left would behave as explained for those where it takes place from the right. The former battalions would, of course, march in, headed by their left, and the latter by their right divisions, and either those posted on one or the other side have to change wings, to assume the proper position, before they move into the *alignement*.

To illustrate this further, and to render the principle acted upon still more obvious, we will suppose a contiguous line of columns right in front, to take up the several positions *a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, k, l, m* (*fig. 277*), parallel, oblique, or towards the flanks, and remark that, if the point of *appui* be to the right, and the line to face as the columns, as the adjutants will have to take post on the left, the battalion columns will already be prepared for entry, but were the point of *appui* to the left, as the adjutants mark the right, the battalions would have to change their head and to place the left divisions in front to favour the formation.

Whenever the new line faces to the same side the battalion columns did before, the regular order in which the corps first stood will be preserved amongst them, but were the line to face to the contrary way and former rear of the columns, this regular order will no longer be kept up, as by the manœuvre, the battalions on the right will be brought to the left, and those on the left be removed to the right; yet as the natural disposition within the battalions remains undisturbed, this deviation in the relative positions of the corps is immaterial, but might even be avoided by the battalion masses, before, and while still in the general column, counter-marching by corps from the rear, or, if deployed, in contiguous columns, by their taking up a kind of echelon position, as shewn in *fig. 278*, so as to be enabled without interference or impeding each other's march, to

cross and proceed to their respective adjutants. No material difference arises were any of the rear positions *n, o, p, q, r, s, t, u*, to be taken up, as the columns, by merely in the first instance changing front by the counter-march of divisions by files, will, after they have been brought to face the new line, be reduced to the operations precedently described where they take place to the original front.<sup>55</sup>

In the time of Frederick the Great it was customary, in the Prussian infantry, for the separate battalion columns, when thus stepping to their adjutants, to direct their course as if intended to move 40 paces beyond them. This, by leading them opposite the point of entry when still at some distance from it, was designed to enable the corps finally to conclude their march in the perpendicular direction, and viewed as conducive to ensure precision, which a momentary halt, as the heads approached the line, previous to the wheeling in of the divisions, still promoted. That the corps may, instead of taking up their positions by the rear, direct their steps to the spots their heads or any central parts are to be placed, will easily be deduced from the preceding, as well as the modes

<sup>55</sup> When the new position is to the rear, a previous counter-march of divisions by files, by presenting the columns facing to the contrary way they did before, must obviously reduce the performance afterwards, to what it would have been, had the new line been originally to the front of the columns.



of execution which would be resorted to if so required.

The duties incumbent on adjutants, when thus employed in taking up the ground, to mark the rear of their battalions on an alignement are the preservation of the direction and the true distance : the former will depend on their exactly covering those already posted and the distant object, the latter is chiefly owing to the eye ; the first is, therefore, easily determined, which the latter is not ; habit here, as in most cases of the kind, will render this more or less familiar, and some assistance may be derived from counting the paces, while galloping over the line, in taking the distance from the preceding adjutant. An error in the direction may be remedied by a subsequent marker, but a mistake in the distance is irreparable, and must necessarily influence all those following ; yet the consequences arising from it are not always alike, for were the battalion of *appui*, from being the nearest, to enter the first, and the succession kept up so that the farthest removed steps in the last, as each corps in turn would march up to its just distance, and the faulty adjutant would be left behind, the mistake would be immediately detected and provided for, and no great inconvenience could be apprehended ; but far otherwise would it be, were the regulating flank the last to take up its situation, as, if so, the whole would have to wait for its being posted, and for all the corps to be on the line, before any

correction or alteration in the position could be attempted.

That the formation into line from close column to a distant alignment does not require a previous deployment in mass we have already observed, and *fig. 275* will fully illustrate.

A few battalions which, on the flank of a wing, while unfolding, are intended to be either refused to cover the position, or thrown to the front to turn an enemy's flank, might provoke the necessity for an oblique deployment (*fig. 270, 271, 272*), which, whenever thus applied, will require the whole of the operating body to stand in one column, and that column to execute on its front division. It is evident that this manœuvre, already intricate for a single battalion, will from the increased depth, where several of them act in concert be still more so; the wheeling and placing of the mass perpendicular on the intended line, to perform afterwards in the common way, will generally, if not always, strike as recommendable.

The various formations into line from echelon, already fully described in chap. ix, § 5, and those from file, under chap. x. § 2, we will, at once, proceed to the consideration of a method which, suited to particular cases of an unfavourable ground, seems, as such, peculiarly well adapted to the operation of a close column, which, on leaving a defile, is immediately called to deploy by battalions in mass or even to extend into line; supposing the former to be the case while the right is in front (*fig. 279*,

A), as the movement is to the right so soon as the first battalion gains the alignment, it faces towards the flank to which it is to move (here the right), and steps to its adjutant, who is stationed where his inward flank is to rest; on its arriving thither, it halts and fronts, which conclude the part it has to perform: this is in the like manner repeated by every other corps, except by the last, which is merely required to advance into its position, as may be seen in *fig. 279, A*. Should, under the same circumstance, where the right is leading, the formation be to the left (*fig. 279, B*), the head battalion, on reaching the line, stands still, while the second and those following, as they in turn close up to the first, face in mass to the left to file behind it, and as they respectively gain the spot opposite their ground, halt, front, and march straight forwards into their places on the line displayed by the leading corps, and marked by their adjutants.

It will easily be remarked, that in the former case of a right execution when the right is a-head, the battalions in the general column operate in a manner not unlike the divisions do when the single battalion wheels into an alignment, and that, where the movement is to the left, it still bears a stronger resemblance to the successive formation.

When so deployed in mass, the battalion columns may double the front to grand division, and the line be restored afterwards on any of the corps in the manner explained, or, if desired, a distant

alignement may be taken up on the adjutants, who are previously sent forwards to mark the ground. Yet, after all that may be adduced in support of those modes of operating, shewn in *fig. 279*, they are not so simple as that exhibited in *fig. 274*, and are, besides, somewhat longer, owing to the momentary check the battalions, while in the general column, experience, as those preceding, face and clear their front on joining the line: but if those inconveniences must deprive those manners of a general application, there are cases, however, where their assistance cannot be well dispensed with, and where a confined theatre of action points them out not merely as eligible, but as the only modes of execution practicable.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>56</sup> It is easily remarked in *fig. 279*, that the ground marked C is saved by this mode of performance. On the same principle might a general column, likewise, have been immediately extended into a line prolonged by the adjutants, by the battalions, as they arrive on the ground, which immediately deploy on their inward flank division. When the movement is here to the right while the right is in front (A, *fig. 279*), the general operation takes place on the left battalion, and the corps execute each on its left division; but, if right is front it be effected to the left (B, *fig. 279*), the evolution recurs on the leading battalion here the right, and the battalions perform on their leading divisions. In the latter case, the head, by taking post the first, offers some advantage from presenting more rapidly a part of the troops on the line capable of being actively employed; yet this valuable circumstance might be equally secured though operating on the rear (here the left), by allowing the order in which the corps stood in the general column, to be inverted, which we have already frequently observed to be immaterial in a tactical point of view, provided in each battalion the interior arrangement be preserved.

The last manœuvre we shall now consider is that suggested by Count de Lindenau, a Prussian officer, whose military merits elevated to the honourable post of aid-de-camp to Frederick II.<sup>27</sup> He supposes ten battalions right in front, and at open distance, to discover unexpectedly and while on the march, an enemy at about 1200 paces.—Adverting to the inefficiency of our known methods of formation, none of which, he says, will, under the case alluded to, admit of the completion of the line, he proposes, when thus critically situated, for the five rear battalions immediately to face to the left, and, after gaining sufficient ground towards the flank to disengage their front, to face again to the right, and to move forwards, while those a-head (No. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5) face about to march in the like manner to the rear (*fig.* 283), and back over the very ground from whence they came; when the

<sup>27</sup> *Traité de la grande tactique Prussienne*, French translation, chap. viii. This work of Count Lindenau, which, from its title seems to promise an elucidation of the Prussian tactics, is rather a critical examination of some of the movements practised by them at the time, with an attempt at removing the defects exposed, by substituting new evolutions to those performed; but, though the Prussian officer has been less fortunate in this last endeavour of his, the arguments he adduces against those in use are seldom incorrect, and always such as to deserve, at least, attention. On the whole, it is a very instructive volume, which, besides the immediate matter it contains, is much calculated, by the reasoning with which it abounds, to give the young officers an habit of discussion on the movements, and a facility to discover the merit they possess, as well as the faults they betray in their execution.

two columns stand a-breast, they are both halted, and that on the right additionally made to resume its proper front. Thus coupled, the necessary points are rapidly established, and the formation effected on the head division of the left column (here the first platoon of the sixth battalion which acts as a base to the line, and as point of *appui* to the corps on the right), by the battalions on the right which successively, by divisions, wheel into the alignment, while those on the left, that, by hastening the step in rear, have closed to the front, as far as circumstances permitted during the progress from *f* to *f*, separately move to their adjutants, who have planted themselves on the line at the places where the respective heads of their battalions are to be posted, and there deploy on arrival. The sixth battalion, of course, operates immediately and on the spot. The Count observes that, if preferred, the entering by the successive wheel of divisions might equally apply to the column on the left as well as to that on the right. However, as not only inversion in the battalions which is immaterial, but inversion in the divisions within the battalions which is momentous, would result from it, this measure seems little calculated to promote the manœuvre, particularly as it fails in expedition, since no speedier conclusion from it is derived: yet, were the diverging of the battalions on the left wing and separate march to their ground under the proximity alluded to, deemed hazardous, the successive formation, with-

out incurring the reflection of clubbing the battalions, might readily provide for the means of a compact, a safe, and a rapid execution.<sup>58</sup>

On passing in review the deployment as practised in the foreign armies, no great novelty will be presented, their modes of operating assimilating to that given for the British, while the trifling varieties they exhibit are merely derived from the peculiar features retained of the respective systems from which they emanate.

Thus, for instance, in the French infantry,<sup>59</sup> and which equally applies to the troops of the Netherlands,<sup>60</sup> they likewise, in both services, reduce from open to half distance (*distance de sections*), double the front (*front de pelotons* to *front de division*), and then close up as a preparative for deploying. The line taken up is equally that the front of the column stands upon before, and the division of formation, if not the head one, is likewise, when cleared, brought up to it; while marching in file the divisions are also restricted to the straight direction, and not allowed to incline towards the *alignement*; but they deviate

<sup>58</sup> As the intention of General Lindenau's manœuvre is still better answered by closing the column on the centre or any of its rear divisions, it seems not endowed with the peculiar merit the author appears exclusively to attach to it; it has also the defect of removing the troops to a parallel line, which, as it will hereafter appear, is always an improper mode of manœuvring whenever an enemy is suddenly and unexpectedly discovered in front.

<sup>59</sup> F. R. *école de bataillon*, 404—445; *évolutions de ligne*, 222—363.

<sup>60</sup> *Bataillons-school*, 415—456; *linie évolutien*, 224—305.

in the division chiefs, or platoon officers, if it take place by platoons, who repeat the caution when heard, and signify each to his own men the part they are to act, and whether they are to stand still to regulate, or to face, and, in the latter case, on what side they are to do so : this, by creating an unnecessary noise seems detrimental to regularity, and from the compact position in which the divisions are placed at the time, is at least superfluous. In dressing, the mode already explained and adapted to all successive formations, is again referred to, two *jalonneurs* are fixed for the division acted upon, and the line is prolonged by the outward guides of the other platoons who take post to the front to cover them. However, additionally to those named in the preceding, the centre serjeant of the regulating division (*sous officier de remplacement*) steps here between the *jalonneurs* (markers), and faces outwards ; it is the adjutant-major who is directed to superintend the dress and exact covering of that centre under officer, as well as the platoon guides as they in turn appear on the alignement ; when the movement is central, he performs that duty with the right wing, and leaves to the adjutant the care of properly stationing those on the left. The chiefs of divisions, when advancing on the line, march in front of their men, and as they arrest their progress when still short of two paces, they take post on the flank next the last formed division ; from thence, standing themselves in the ranks, they dress their two platoons.



When the manœuvre is extended to the line, the French so far again coincide with the British mode of operating, that the battalions first deploy in mass, but they form *divisions* (grand divisions), and close up before and while still in the general column. The line of formation is, likewise, that of the front division, and two *jalonneurs* are fixed before it to determine the alignement, a rear battalion, if acted upon, is brought up when cleared in front. In this deployment of masses, the adjutant-major is enjoined, while moving by the flank, to take post where the mass is to cease its march, which appears unnecessary, and were he to mistake his distance instead of promoting would most likely tend to perplex the performance, but that which is less objectionable, is his preceding his corps on the line to mark at six paces from the last fixed battalion the inward flank of his own, a position much easier ascertained than the outward, in which he was removed according to the late Rules and Regulations.<sup>61</sup> When deploying in mass, the central serjeant (*sergent de remplacement*) of the leading division in the mass of direction, like the one of the regulating division, when the battalion deploys into line, steps out to the front between the two *jalonneurs* to assist in determining the position, which is still further secured by both the right and left-hand guides as well as the centre serjeant's

<sup>61</sup> By the F. E. and E. the adjutants, in marking the ground for their battalions in mass, are directed to take post on the inner flank, which is much preferable.

of the front divisions in the other masses, who, in covering the three first situated, display the ground to be occupied by their own battalions.

When a contiguous line of battalion masses is ultimately to convert into the extended position, the corps within themselves operate as explained for the single battalion ; the inward divisions of those corps not regulating, and on which divisions they are each respectively to deploy, are, however, then halted by the battalion chiefs as they leave the ordered interval of 20 mètres from that preceding : the other divisions, as before, are arrested by their platoon or division commanders. In the regulating battalion two *jalonneurs* are planted for the division of direction, in every other corps the right and left hand guides of the flank platoon first posted on the line, are, in the like manner, fixed to determine its position, on those markers, the centre serjeant (*sergent de remplacement*) and remaining outward platoon guides dress by covering and facing them. In the corps which form on their rear divisions, the adjutant-majors preparatively mark by taking post themselves the points their inward flanks are to rest, and from thence situate the guides ; but this is not repeated for those battalions that operate on their leading divisions, which from moving already on the alignement render this aid unnecessary.

When the formation is completed, the chief commander concludes the evolution by directing the removal of the colours from the front *drapeau à*

*vos places.*<sup>62</sup> The general line is determined by two aids-de-camp, or mounted officers, who, dispatched in time, take their stations by facing each other at the extremities of the position.

Two, three, nay even four battalions are permitted to deploy at once, after the manner of the single corps.

The French and Netherlands infantries, have no oblique deployment; the column is therefore invariably first situated so as to stand perpendicularly to the position. When the formation is to the rear, they, as we do, precede the deployment, by the counter-march of divisions by files.

The Prussians,<sup>63</sup> in this manœuvre, secure the dress after the manner of the French, but in every other respect, follow the mode laid down in the late Rules and Regulations; the officers lead their files, and where it takes place by platoons, shift their flank if the movement be to the left; they stop in their persons when the body by which they are preceded is arrested; and halt and front their men, to lead them straight up into the alignment, where, if the movement be to the left, they halt and dress them from the outward flank of the standing platoon, which, on the right, has just taken post before; but if to the right and from the left, some deviation arises, as they shift their flank before they effect the individual correc-

<sup>62</sup> In chap. xi. § 3, the French mode of ascertaining the line for the successive formation, is fully described, and the conclusive command *drapeaux à vos places* adverted to.

<sup>63</sup> P. R. absch. iii. kap. viii. § 6, 7, 8.

tion, which correction, therefore, by the Prussians, always takes place while deploying from the same flank, namely, the right. The alignement is ascertained for the directing platoon, by two serjeants, who face each other, and the line is prolonged by an under officer of every other division, who covers those first planted at platoon distance; all those markers are corrected by the outward flank officer, of the division directing the alignement.

Those deployments, from being chiefly confined to an execution on the head *zuge* (platoon), betray into the defect of inversion whenever the performance is to the right while the right is in front, or to the left when the left leads; as their Reglement, in those cases, however, allows of an execution on the rear division, the indulgence should be acted upon, since by removing the disadvantages an alteration in the primitive position of the divisions exposes to, it becomes unquestionably the eligible expedient.

In the central column of attack, besides the right and left hand serjeants of the two leading *zuge*, who both step before the front to determine the alignement, the colour bearer also leaves the ranks to post himself on that line, which is prolonged by an under officer of each of the remaining platoons, who, as they successively take post on the same, face towards the centre.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>64</sup> When, during the attack, the extended position is to be retrieved, it is performed in a trot, or double quick, when so the serjeants do not step out to the front and the platoons immediately fire on taking post.

As to the Danes, the principal distinctions which their mode presents, consist in the officers, who are in front of their divisions, instead of being stationed on the inward flanks when advancing on the line, and in the dressing, which, when the formation is to the right and correction is from the left is no longer performed by the immediate leaders of platoons, but by those of the next platoons on the left; when this is the case, the care of posting the two platoons of the light company devolves on their own captain, who, from his position on the left of the whole, is the best situated to fulfil this duty with both his platoons.<sup>65</sup> The alignment is always the line on which the head of the column stands, and to which any rear division, if regulating, is brought up; they have no oblique deployment.

In the Austrian infantry, this movement is conducted on somewhat different principles from those explained in the preceding, as, besides the particular of the directing division that remains stationary on its ground, and which, accordingly compels all those standing before it to fall back and march to the rear to gain their positions, it offers a peculiar execution.<sup>66</sup> Thus in a column of *zuge* were the evolution, for instance, performed on the head; that head *zuge* (and it would be the same with any other fractional part of the battalion operated upon), stands fast (*fig.* 282), and the others, after closing up to it, if not so approached before,

<sup>65</sup> The Danish company is of two platoons, chap. i. § 13.

<sup>66</sup> A. R. haupt. ii. absch. iii. § 6.

face and march in file till arrested each by his outward *chargen* who, in counting the paces, stops the advance when (after the division in his front has been halted) he has taken the number of steps the body he leads contains in its front, but he, at the same time sufficiently obliques so as to halt and front his men one pace to the rear of the ground to be occupied by the rear rank when posted on the alignment; the inward *chargen* then assumes the command, but awaits that the following *zuge* (or any part performed by) has taken post beyond and aside his own, before he orders his on the line, where, on arrival, he dresses his men from the inner flank, on the distant point and takes post on the flank. The rear ranks, while advancing, regain their distances and the supernumeraries fall back, to recover their original situation behind the battalion. This is successively performed by the second and all those following, which, manœuvring as described, move on the line each when that beyond it is fronted and fixed on its side; the second when the third is so posted; the third when the fourth, &c. The fractional parts must, of course, sufficiently oblique to halt and front in the prolongation of the line first taken up by the second *zuge* (that next to formation), as may be seen in *fig.* 282.

When the recovery of the line occurs on the rear, the last *zuge* (half company, half division, or division) stands still, and those *zuges* in front face about to close up to it; when this is effected they face again to the right or left as may be required, to march by their flanks. In the present movement, it

is the leading *chargen* of the third rank who tells the steps, halts his men, and faces them to the rear, at which period the inward *chargen* of the proper front rank, the same as when it takes place to the front, assumes the command and, performing as mentioned, likewise sees the following *zuge* placed next to his own platoon before he advances his men into the alignment, where he halts, fronts, and stations them, and finally takes post in the ranks. This is successively performed by all of them, till the last, which, by gaining its position, concludes the manœuvre. A compound operation of both those explained presents itself when the evolution is central, the divisions in front of that of formation first face about, they all then close up to the latter which stands fast, the others face again to the right or left as the operation requires; and while those in front perform as explained for an execution to the rear, those in rear operate as mentioned where the line is completed to the front.

By the mode just explained the execution is somewhat shortened, yet, on the whole, it is objectionable; the successive halting and fronting of the divisions left to the care of the file leaders, although they reckon their steps, is precarious and likely to occasion improper distances; besides the faults of one division must evidently operate on all those following, which is not to be so much dreaded where the officers stop in their persons, and permit their men to proceed, as, by observing the error of a preceding platoon, they may rectify it when placing

their own, which is still better provided for, when that duty is taken by the field officers. The oblique direction, in which the divisions are ordered to proceed, while under the influence of the flank march, seems also too intricate to admit of a performance beyond the front of a single battalion, yet, as the preparatory deployment into mass has been already noticed as preferable for the taking up of a line, this reproach is considerably weakened, but with it also is the alleged advantage of celerity in formation much enfeebled, as the time gained by the oblique line of march for the few companies of one or two battalions to the utmost, must evidently become immaterial.

I should now conclude what refers to the deployments were it not for a method I saw practised by the first battalion of the Russian Regiment of Narva, in which the line was restored so as to face to the contrary way and former rear of the mass it was formed from: when this is designed, and it may, when so either take place on the front, or on the rear of the column (*fig.* 280); the divisions are at first faced as for the common evolution, but, stepping off, they countermarch round the rear rank, and thus move in the opposite direction they originally faced, and would have proceeded by the ordinary deployment. When opposite their ground, they halt, front, and march into the alignment. It is to be observed that, when the line is thus taken up on the front division, as the formation after the counter-march is to the rear



(A *fig.* 280), the divisions on halting, after the flank march, must face towards their rear rank, and the latter a-head step into their stations on the line; during this motion to the rear, the Russian platoon leaders march behind the centre, and allow their men to step a few paces beyond the line of formation before they order them to halt and to regain their proper front, they then dress them from the standing flank, and take post on the right; shifting their flank before the front rank, to take that position, had the dressing been from the left.

When the centre column thus operates, the two platoons coupled a-head face and counter-march in a single body, but the others face outwards form the centre, and in counter-marching round the rear rank perform so that those posted on the left move outwards of those placed on the right (*fig.* 281).

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## SECTION V.

### *Conclusion of the Formation into Line.*

Among the different methods offered to convert a column, a body in echelon, or in file, into line, the wheeling up of the divisions and the manner distinguished by the appellation of deployment, claim special notice. The echelon movement, useful for a battalion, and perhaps applicable to two or three, can hardly suffer an increase beyond them; the additional difficulty derived from extension, and additional room it demands for performance, both thwarting its use in proportion as

the numerical strength receives augmentation. It is, besides, of a partial effect, and only adapted to a right formation when the left is in front, or, to a left formation when the right leads ; but, if thus restricted in its use, the particular occasion to which it applies, will still afford sufficient opportunity for its frequent practice ; thus, for instance, it may be favourably employed by a battalion, which, in diverging from a general column, instead of moving to its adjutant, reaches its position by the ground on which its head is to be placed (1st batt. *fig.* 257), and likewise suit the central formation in which the battalion acted upon, as well as the two immediately adjoining on each side of it, may, perhaps, most advantageously thus gain their new positions.<sup>67</sup>

The deployment, from being exclusively adapted to the recovery of the line from close column, the favourable circumstances attending that order, may, with propriety, be included within the benefits derived from it, and as such, the concealing of the strength, and leaving in doubt as to the intended position, may not be improperly enumerated amongst the advantages adduced in behalf of its eligibility ; since, without this movement

<sup>67</sup> When from the open column the formation is to the front, and towards the pivot side, while the line is to face as the column, the oblique echelon is invariably to be preferred according to the French *Règlement*, and in the column of the line the same evolution is equally to be performed by the corps separately, as they each join on the alignment (*fig.* 261, 262.)

they must be lost, the other expedients all demanding a certain distance to be kept between the successive bodies: nor, as we have already observed, can any of the other movements well contend with the wheeling up and the deployment for priority in the recovery of the line. Thus preponderating in the scale of the manœuvres, some further disquisition respecting those two evolutions will become desirable, and, since in them the striking features of difference consist in the column's arrival by the ground where its head, its rear, or any central part is to be posted, a careful survey of these three cases, each by itself, will tend to display the peculiar province and utility of those two manœuvres.

Hence, were an open column<sup>66</sup> to arrive by the rear of its position, and to enter it by the successive wheel of its divisions, the evolution would not be more protracted than if the close column, under the same circumstance of the right leading, were to approach an *alignement* in the like manner by the left, and to deploy in its rear division (*fig. 285*), as the termination of the movements would in both cases require the head division to conclude its course over the line *a b*. But a speedier recovery of the line is derived from the close column, when the ground is approached by the head or any central part, as, besides the double wheel the successive formation will

<sup>66</sup> Although the movement is here supposed to the right when the right is leading, it will equally apply were the movement to the left and the left a-head.

then require (*fig. 286, C*), the ground paced over is more considerable; nor will this objection be removed by facing and filing the divisions, as the line (*f b, fig. 286, A*) will still remain obviously longer than that traced out where deploying (*c d e, fig. 286, B*), and this be repeated for the central formation, in which the difference between the lines *a b c* and *d e f* (*fig. 287*), performed by the rear divisions in both, to terminate the manœuvres, will still offer greater advantage in behalf of the deployment, and establish its character of expedition.

This, however, presupposes the column to have closed up previous to its reaching the line of formation; for, had this been neglected, and the open distance been preserved till on the alignment, the time taken up for the approach of the rear divisions must be accounted for, and by, being added to that computed while actually deploying, it would offer a protracted instead of a reduced execution, since, even from an intermediate point, the course traced out by the rear division would be nearly alike under the two movements; and where the alignment is entered by the position destined for the rear division, the whole of the time taken up by that last to close would be obviously lost, as the unfolding cannot commence before this is completed, and that the two manœuvres will afterwards remain of equal duration, namely, the period the head division takes to step from *a* to *b* (*fig. 285*). Now, as the open column, by changing wings,

may always contrive to have the contrary flank a-head to that of entry, it may be safely established, *that where the distances have been preserved until arrival on the line of formation, the successive entry by the wheeling of the divisions is the shorter and therefore the preferable movement.*<sup>70</sup>

It will appear strange that the closing of the column, so evidently beneficial, has not escaped the lash of censure.<sup>71</sup> Major Rösch, amongst others, took particular exception against it, but, as he chiefly deprecated the measure from an impression of the improbability of its completion previous to arrival on the line, and lays his principal stress on the time which would be lost to accomplish it, as well as the considerable exposure to the artillery to which it would subject the troops while in process of moving up, the evils he apprehends and complains of have not escaped notice; but, as the column, if not completely, may generally, in a great measure, have drawn up, and,

<sup>70</sup> This merely refers to the operations of a single corps, as still less remains to be said in behalf of the deployment, when the separate march of the battalions to their detached adjutants on the line is included and brought in competition with it.

<sup>71</sup> This closing of the divisions in mass as a preparative to deploy, is enjoined in all the Regulations of the European infantries, and is also much insisted upon by General Scharnhorst, vol. iii. § 120, as well as by most of the military authors; but it was objected to by Major Rösch, who had his remarks published in *Die der Militärischen Monatschrift vom Monat Jenner*, 1785. These objections are also inserted in the work of Major Werkamp, who, partaking of his sentiments, produces them when speaking of the deployment.

if not entirely, at least in a great degree, have closed to the front, his objections seem, after all, destitute of a proper foundation; nay, he himself conclusively admits, that where the approached situation of the divisions might be timely assumed, and previous to arrival on the ground of execution, from it benefit must be derived, and that, where the column consists of parts of the two lines, the close position can, after all, not well be dispensed with, as, from being at too great a distance, under the open construction, the corps of the second line could not otherwise well co-operate, and too much to the rear would be obliged to advance to gain their proper distance before they could manœuvre in conjunction with and afford the desired support to the first line.

The compact position of the mass, thence inferred as sometimes favourable, and frequently unavoidable, from its utility claims particular attention, and demands to be subjected to a proper arrangement; for, were it taken up at once, and the divisions immediately closed, which some have been led to fancy as conducive to promptitude, considerable inconvenience would be felt from moving for a length of time under a formation so repugnant to motion, and which, from the heat it occasions, and dust it creates, would become so trying and so fatiguing to troops: to avoid this, the alteration has been viewed as more favourable when progressive, and where, as already explained, the reduction in depth at first, has been

confined to half or quarter distance,<sup>72</sup> at which time the divisions are doubled to the front of grand-divisions, and when this is accomplished finally closed up to a mass.<sup>73</sup> When a close column of the line is to take up the extended position, unless some particular circumstances direct to the contrary, and compel, for instance, to resort to the manner represented (*fig. 273*), the previous deployment of the corps in masses (*fig. 274*), or that in which they in separate columns march to their adjutants who mark the ground, should be preferred (*fig. 275*); for, although the first of these two latter betrays the defect of a procrastinated operation, and the last, that of leaving the troops in a defenceless state whilst in progress, those evils become of a minor consideration from the movement itself not being of a description to be per-

<sup>72</sup> The quarter instead of half distance, is generally specified in the late Rules and Regulations, part iv. § 187.

<sup>73</sup> As the propriety of the preparatory increase to the front of grand divisions has been questioned, and has been declared superfluous by some military men, the adducing of the reasons in behalf of this measure will not be viewed as inappropriate; they are, 1st, that, by abridging the depth of the column it shortens the manœuvre and leaves the troops less exposed to the effect of the enemy's artillery; 2nd, that it secures a speedier recovery of the line, the front of division, rather too small for this operation, not answering so well as that from 30 to 40 files better adapted for it. Were the latter number, however increased, it would lead to inaccuracy in the performance, perplex the file march, and delay the dressing. That the deployment is no manœuvre suited to the open column, will be easily seen from the unnecessary ground to be stepped over, and time it would require for accomplishment.

formed in the presence of an antagonist ; nor, in deed, will the use of the deployments so exclusively present itself on service as it is commonly imagined ; the great time a general column of the line demands to unfold itself by this movement, frequently offering an insuperable obstacle to its application ; and yet, where this is attempted to be remedied by decreasing the depth and multiplying the number of the columns, which, in keeping up the parallel advance, from acting separately, must obviously tend to shorten the conclusive extension into line, unless well prepared beforehand, from it still greater evils result ; for, without adverting to the improbability of preserving the exact distances betwixt bodies which not unfrequently move out of sight, and which objection, by the bye, as General Jomini most judiciously observes, is almost in itself an argument sufficiently strong to blast the expedient, it abounds with numberless other defects ; for instance, were one of those columns to gain its ground before the others had arrived, would it not obviously run the risk of being partially attacked, and if so, be certainly defeated ; however, the least delay experienced by a neighbouring one must render them all liable to this ; and, should it be one of the central columns which is so detained, it will still become of more serious consequence, as nothing short of complete discomfiture must be expected where a line is thus cut asunder. Were an enemy, while those columns



are still on the march, to push between them, insulated and surrounded, their situation would be truly critical; but, admitting even that they all arrive together at their posts at the proper time, and without any error in distance, divested of promptitude, the time taken up in forming the line, if attempted in sight of an enemy, will always give him every opportunity to counteract your intention, and probably to outflank you before the formation is completed. At Minden, the Marechal de Contades had sad experience of the difficulties arising from this mode of operating; he marched in nine columns of two or three brigades, which, by decreasing the depth, was certainly of a nature to alleviate the ultimate conversion into line and to reduce it within a shorter duration; still, four hours were spent in completing his disposition, and want of room between some brigades as well as considerable chasms between the others were discovered after the deployment was at last effected. If the Duke Ferdinand of Brunswick was more fortunate in more rapidly unfolding his eight columns, and in presenting his order of battle, it was owing to particular circumstances of locality, and to a thorough knowledge of the ground which, seldom to be acquired, had, in this instance, been obtained by a careful survey of the field of action precedently taken by his officers, while the theatre of operation confined between a morass and the Weser, was for him such as to secure him from a flank attack; and he had, in addition, the good luck to see the

French general awkwardly performing in his front, the counterpart of his manœuvre. At *Steenkirk*, had our William III. on leaving the defiles, boldly marched his columns into the French camp, he would; says Feuquieres,<sup>73</sup> who was an eye-witness, have, beyond a doubt, routed the French army, but, conceiving it of immediate necessity to form the line, he lost that time which was industriously employed by the Marechal de Luxemburg to carry on his dispositions, to provide against this unforeseen approach; and thus, though surprised, successfully to repulse the attack of the allies.

General Rogniat, who also rejects the manner of moving in several columns, which he particularizes as the tacticks of the time of Louis XIV,<sup>74</sup> and

<sup>73</sup> *Mémoires du Marquis de Feuquieres Steenkerke*, partie iii. chap. lxxx.

<sup>74</sup> Général Rogniat, in his instructive, chap. x. on marches (*Considérations sur l'art de la guerre*), observes, that the small armies of Turenne and Luxemburg, from 20 to 30,000 men, used to perform their progress on the route in no less than four or five columns; as so many parallel roads, at the desired distance, were but rarely to be met with, they were almost invariably opened on the occasion. The delay of one kept the whole back, nothing was slower, he adds, and more timorous (*timide*), than the marches at that period. To remedy those inconveniences, he devises to divide the forces into strong bodies or armies, each of 30,000 men, which, capable of acting by themselves, remain in a single column, merely to diverge in masses of five cohorts in the first line, and five cohorts in the second when at a league from the enemy, a distance at which it would no longer be safe, he adds, to keep the whole in a general column; but if it be intended still to advance as it would be also inconvenient to form immediately the line, he recommends thus in masses pre-

describes as slow, and as such incompatible with the rapid motions which should characterize all strategick movements, recommends the march in a single general column, which preceded, by a strong avant guard, on apprizal of a threatened attack, and when still at a league distance, is previously to deploy into masses, each consisting of five cohorts;<sup>75</sup> but he will not admit those latter to be ultimately developed into line, at a greater proximity of the enemy than 400 toises, yet in guarding against the attempt at deploying, in a greater vicinity, and under the effect of grape shot and musketry, he suggests, where the flanks are not sufficiently covered, to leave in the extreme right and left masses, two cohorts of the five in column of divisions at half distance, ready, if required to wheel up, and form the square: he strengthens this proposal of his, by an illustration drawn from his own experience, and from what occurred to the Russian rear guard at *Hof*, near *Eylau*, where, while in line, attacked in front by the French cuirassiers, as the latter by a rapid movement fell upon the left flank,

pared for final extension (an operation he considers to require but five minutes for conclusion after the masses have taken up their ground) to march forwards till at about 400 toises, a proximity in which he deems it prudent to deploy into line, so as not to await, says he, the perilous situation of attempting it under the effect of grape shot and musketry.

<sup>75</sup> His cohorts are each of 570 men placed in three ranks, ten cohorts make a legion, of which five are in the first line, and five in the second.

they in a very short period destroyed the whole body, which consisted of six battalions.<sup>76</sup>

The moving of several bodies out of sight, in order to co-operate in a same attack, was an expedient rarely resorted to by Frederick the Great, and which, when employed by him, invariably turned to his detriment.<sup>77</sup> General Warnery observes that in no battle of the King of Prussia, the line has ever been presented by the deployment, and he says, that if it took place at *Hohenfriedberg* and *Striegau*, as well as at the battle of Parma, in 1734,

<sup>76</sup> In adverting to the danger of performing so precarious an operation, as deploying under the effect of grape shot and musketry; General Rogniat states in his *Considerations sur l'art de la guerre*, chap. vi. ordre de bataille de la legion: "I saw at the battle of Eilau, " Two French divisions, which were advancing in column against " the centre of the Russians, dispersed and annihilated by a sudden " charge of cavalry, while they were deploying into line, because " that manœuvre had been attempted within the enemy's fire, and " soldiers frightened and discountenanced from the shots and " bullets which were tumbling amongst them, were not sufficiently " collected to present a compact and united effort, capable to resist " the shock of the horse."

<sup>77</sup> Under the head of the siege of Olmutz, (vol. ii. chap. x, *Grandes opérations militaires*). Baron Jomini remarks, also that the King of Prussia, during the whole of the seven years war, only twice attempted to move several columns at a considerable distance, with the intention to co-operate on a same point; at the battle of Torgan, and the projected attack on General Laudon, which took place during the siege of Olmutz, and that in both he most completely failed. The revolutionary war, he adds, present no paucity of instances, in which the combined operations of several corps proved likewise abortive.

in which latter the allies likewise executed after this manner, it was without direction ; he further adds, that in all those instances, the defect of this manœuvre became obvious, from the right which was closely engaged before the left was even formed.<sup>78</sup> But if thus deprived of that constant application, which has erroneously been ascribed to the deployments, they will still preserve an important station in the infantry tacticks, and remain of a frequent reference, where a disposition can be taken up while out of reach of the opponent, and particularly so, if parallel. Their utility will be no less felt where a column of route is attacked a-head ; yet then it is merely the vanguard, and perhaps the two or three leading battalions, which should avail themselves of this manœuvre suddenly to appear on the line, since the other ought evidently to operate differently, and be thrown into such an alignement as to endeavour to turn a flank of the assailant. To continue to deploy here would be to repeat the mistake of the Marechal de Soubise, at Rosbach, where, in attempting to offer a parallel line as he brought up his troops in

<sup>78</sup> *Remarques sur L'Essai général de tactique de Guibert*, by General de Warnery, page 90, and page 157, *Varsorte* 1782; this volume, which is written in a light style, aims as much at humour as at information, a copious stock of the latter may however be gathered from it. As it abounds with anecdotes, the reader will run through the pages without being wearied by that didactick dullness, which but too frequently damps the course through a military work ; it is besides a useful companion, while perusing the *Essai général de tactique*.

succession, he had the mortification to see them partially engaged, and regularly driven off as they came up. When the parallel position is to be assumed, the disposition of General Lehwald, at Jägerndorf (*fig.* 284), where the line results from two columns formed on its centre, which, moving a-breast, deploy afterwards outwards, the right column to the right and the left column to the left, seems well adapted, from the constant readiness it admits of formation which merely here requires the leading divisions to halt, as well as from the whole, which, by standing collected and together instead of being spread in distant columns, removes all apprehension of partial attack and interruption.

From the preceding it may be safely deduced, that the march in open column, with its subsequent formation by wheeling, is the safest mode of taking up a position; that easily conducted during progress without leaving anything to chance, this disposition is endowed with the peculiar qualification of admitting throughout and constantly the instantaneous recovery of the line. It was the successful movement of the King of Prussia at Rosbach as well as at Lissa (*Leuthen*),<sup>80</sup> and was employed with results no less decisive and brilliant by the Duke of Wellington at Salamanca; while in motion,

<sup>80</sup> General Jomini (*Grandes opérations*, vol. i. chap. v.) notices, that Frederick the Great never adopted the deployment for the formation of his lines of battle, yet this observation, though much illustrated by him and most properly applied to unfold his principles of high tactics, is not his own, as the remark was made before by his

as the whole remains together and in a single body, there is no risk if attacked, of a part being destroyed for the want of proper support and timely assistance, and by detaching some troops in front, which answers here the two-fold purpose of deceiving the enemy as to the intention as well as of protecting the head, the column is most effectually secured against any attempt. Two lines,<sup>80</sup> at three hundred paces from each other, may thus proceed in two columns, which, after turning the enemy's position, may wheel into line, and by this sudden transition and immediate formation debar the enemy from all means of escape; like the mariner who, driven on shore, sees the fatal rock which he knows must terminate his existence, the impending danger is observed too late to be guarded against. This is what happened at Lissa (*Leuthen*), and at Salamanca, in which eventful days the obstinate resistance of the Austrians in the one, and the French in the other, and the skill of their commanders in both, merely confirmed the excellency of Frederick's tactics, and

countryman, General Warnery, in his work on the *Essai général de tactique* (page 170, on page 129 of Guibert); General Warnery, who was a Swiss, had served under Frederick the Great; his chief reputation was acquired as a cavalry officer.

<sup>80</sup> An army may also at first march in four columns, which each consists of a part of both lines (*fig.* 289), and which, on drawing near the operating ground, recover the double line array and thus entering the alignment conclusively wheel up and advance to the attack.

the skilful movements of the Duke of Wellington;<sup>81</sup> unconfined to a particular ground, as where the formation results from the deployment, the column may halt or advance as deemed expedient, and thus, not confined to a particular spot, take up any position to outflank an enemy, or to counteract any design an antagonist may be desirous of accomplishing.<sup>82</sup>

<sup>81</sup> Of all the battles the Duke of Wellington fought, during his campaigns in the Peninsula, none perhaps afforded so great a scope, for a display of tactical movements, as that of Salamanca. Apparently on the defensive the British commander counteracted every attempt of the French general, who, after several false demonstrations, marches, and counter-marches, at last in endeavouring to turn the right of the British, found himself outflanked on his left, this was chiefly executed on the principle of the march in columns of lines, which, as the British from their position were moving over the inward circle, enabled them constantly to perform within a shorter arch, than the French; the resemblance this action bears to that of Rosbach is striking (*Gazette extraordinary*, 16th of August, 1812, *Account of the War in Spain, Portugal, and the South of France*, by Lieutenant-colonel Jones, of the Royal Engineers, chap. xiv.) this work which every Englishman should have in his library, on account of the event it relates, must become doubly interesting, from its being the production of a military man. It is a fair narration of the transactions of the campaigns in the Peninsula, divested of those partialities which but too frequently disgrace the pen of the historian.

The movement of Marshal Beresford to turn the right of the French at Toulouse, was also performed in columns of lines, which marched in the continuation of their position to the left.

<sup>82</sup> The authors to whom I have been principally indebted for the observations inserted in this section, respecting the formation of the line are Jomini (*Grandes opérations militaire*, vol. i. chap. v. vol. iii. remarks on the battle of Minden, chap. xv.) General



*Recapitulation respecting the Formation into Line.  
For the Battalion.*

*First,* The open column may enter an alignment to the front (*fig. 285*), by the wheeling in of its divisions within the same time a close column takes to deploy, when it gains its position by the place at which its rear is to rest.

*Second,* But the close column and the deployment offer an advantage of promptitude in formation over the open column and the wheeling of divisions into an alignment, if the said alignment be joined by the ground the head or any central part is to be situated.

*Third,* an open column forms the line to the pivot side, by wheeling up (*fig. 258*), and to the reverse side by the successive formation (*fig. 258 and 251*).

*Fourth,* If the new line be to the front,<sup>23</sup> and on gaining it the column has preserved its dis-

Scharnhorst (*Handbuch*, vol. iii. § 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 140, and 141), and General Rogniat (*Considérations sur l'art de la Guerre* the 6th and chiefly the 10th chapter).

<sup>23</sup> Were the formation to the pivot side, and the new line to face as the column, the mode of marching to the ground where the head is to be stationed, and the entry thither by the oblique echelon, as directed in the French *Règlement*, accomplishes the intention evidently much quicker, than if, in compliance with the late Rules and Regulations, the battalions in column step to the rear of their positions, and stationed adjutants, and as no greater exposure is apparently resulting from it, and it reveals no particular defects from being the shortest expedient. it seemingly pleads eligibility.

tances, no attempt to close up is any longer admissible, but the column must perform under its open construction. The divisions will accordingly successively wheel in to the reverse flank, if the line is intended to face as the column C (*fig.* 249), or to the pivot side if it be meant to face to the contrary way and former rear D. Should the position be, however, towards the pivot side, and the line to front as the column, the echelon movement pleads eligibility (*fig.* 249, E); and lastly, the successive formation must be employed were the alignement to be taken up to the reverse side of the column, and the new line to front to its former rear F.

*Fifth,* The like positions and circumstances are with equal facility obtained to the rear, by the column preceding the operation of formation by the counter-march of divisions in file, and after the change of front, performing as described where it occurs to the original front.

### *General Column of the Line.*

*First,* The formation from open column by wheeling up, where practicable, is generally preferred for the column of the line.

Yet, if out of reach of the enemy,

*Second,* From the close column of grand divisions, the formation may, for one, two, three, and even four battalions, be performed by the common deployment (*fig.* 273); but if that number be

exceeded, the corps must first take up a contiguous line of battalion masses (*fig. 274*), and form to the front of grand divisions before they are called to extend into the *alignement*.<sup>84</sup>

*Third*, When the deployment is adopted, and the parallel position is intended, the manner represented (*fig. 284*) where the formation results from two columns that march a-breast and extend to both flanks, appears not ill suited.

*Fourth*, Obstacles and circumstances of a peculiar nature can merely authorise the performances shewn in *fig. 279*.

*Fifth*, An open as well as a close column may, likewise, by the battalions which leave the general column and march to their adjutants who have taken up the ground to mark the rear of their positions,<sup>85</sup> remove to any distant ground (*fig. 275, 276*).

<sup>84</sup> It has already been mentioned that General Rogniat describes this preparatory deployment into mass, as taking place when still at a league distance from the enemy, and the final deployment when at 400 toises; his masses consist of five cohorts, and he calculates the time they will take up to extend to four or five minutes.

<sup>85</sup> The corps, from acting separately, may be guided here in taking post by what has been specified for the single battalion, particularly by what was inserted under the fourth rule for the battalion; see also note 83.

## SECTION VI.

*Changes in the Position of a Line.*<sup>66</sup>

This manœuvre, the object of which is the removal of troops in the field of battle from the ground of occupation to that deemed more favourable to promote the general design, presents, when viewed as to the situation in which the old and new positions stand relatively to each other, the general heads of, 1st, the new line to be in the prolongation; 2nd, of its being parallel or nearly so; 3rd, perpendicular; and 4th, oblique to that quitted.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>66</sup> R. and R. part iii. general changes of position, § 104; change of position of a battalion, § 105, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 157, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163; part iv. general changes of position of a line, § 180, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 195, book of G. O. No. 39.

<sup>67</sup> It is true that those four which offer the principal features of distinction, are liable again to be subdivided, and so numerous are the various dispositions and lines to be taken up, that fairly enumerated, they will be found no less than 86.

*Parallel to the Front.*—1st, perfectly opposite; 2nd, outflanking to the right; 3rd, outflanking to the left, the line to face to either side ..... 6

*To the Rear.*—4th, perfectly opposite; 5th, outflanking to the right; 6th, outflanking to the left; the line to face either side..... 6

*In the Prolongation to the Right.*—1st, to face as before; 2nd, to former rear; and

*To the left.*—3rd, to face as before; 4th, to face to former rear 4

*Perpendicular, cut the old Line.*—1st and 2nd, on either flank; 3rd, on central part, the line to face either side ..... 6

Carried over.

22

Those transitions are chiefly executed in a similar manner, and derived from the simple and compound operations of the march in line, the march of the open column, the echellon movements, the motions in file, and their subsequent formations. Thus, for instance, were a parallel alignment, or nearly so, to be gained, whatever may be the shades of difference the relative situations exhibit, the intention will be always attained, 1st, by the application of the march in line (*A. fig. 290*); 2nd, by the direct echellon substituted for the latter B; 3rd, by the line which breaks into open column, and under that formation proceeds to the new ground, or, after facing, gains it by the flank march (*fig. 119*); 4th, by a double column, which, formed on the centre, extends again on reaching its destination towards the flanks, or if closed on

	Brought forward	22
<i>Intersecting old Line.</i> —4th, to the front on the right flank; 5th, on the left flank; 6th, on the centre, facing either side . . . .		6
<i>To the Rear.</i> —7th, on the right flank; 8th, on the left flank; 9th, on the centre facing either side		6
<i>Detached.</i> —The 12 last circumstances when the line is detached		12
Detached to the right, detached to the left, facing either side		4
<i>Oblique within the old Line.</i> —On either flank the line advanced or retired; on centre, right brought up or moved back, the line to face either side		12
<i>To the front without the old Line.</i> —Nearly opposite; outflanking to the right; outflanking to the left; line both facing and inclining either side		12
<i>To the Rear.</i> —Nearly opposite; outflanking to the right; outflanking to the left; line both facing and inclining either side		12
	Total	86

the march, deploys in the new *alignement* (*fig. 284*).

Should the new position be perpendicular, the intention is fulfilled, 1st, by the application of the open column; 2nd, by the echellon (*fig. 216*); 3rd, the successive formation from file (*fig. 227*); or 4th, the oblique advance, and successive wheeling up of divisions, as shewn in (*fig. 291*).

As to the oblique positions, although the echellon may be resorted to, the march of the open column and its subsequent formations will generally be preferred, particularly if the *alignement* to be occupied be remote.

The last case it still remains to speak of is, where the new line intersects and cuts the old position; if so, it admits of the varying case of either a flank or central performance, but whether it be an extremity or a middle part of the line which directs the alteration, it is the march in open column, or its flank movement, which is the evolution commonly adopted for accomplishment; I say, commonly, because the oblique echellon is here liable to bear its part in the manœuvre, for, though debarred of a general application, it will, for the three or four battalions the nearest to the point regulating, still remain the eligible evolution.

The diversities the movement presents from being thus enumerated, as well as the performances which suit each case adverted to, the elucidation of those latter will be merely wanting to complete the knowledge desirable. But this task

will again not be a little alleviated, from the movements named, with the exception of the march in line already described, confining the additional information wished for to the few particulars which in the present application of alterations in the position of a line, more particularly attract attention.

*March in Line :*

When, free from obstacles, the ground admits of the march in line, and the distance is inconsiderable, a body of infantry may be easily removed by its execution into a parallel position to the front or to the rear of that occupied (*fig. 290, A*). However, the great difficulty attending the progress, when so extended, will almost confine its use to where, in the field of battle, it is performed with the immediate intention of closing upon an antagonist.

*Open Column :*

The use and application of the march, and the movements of the open column to the changes in the position of a line, are so extensive and so general that the whole of the manœuvres included for the alterations under the successive disposition, may not improperly be viewed as merely designed to facilitate the operations of the extended formation.

Confining ourselves at first to the movements of the single battalion, and beginning with the supposition that the new line intersects and cuts the old one, we shall have to observe that, when so,

the division acted upon is preparatorily wheeled, and situated with its pivot on the new line,<sup>83</sup> and the remaining divisions then thrown into an open column of companies; yet, the circular is so contrived that they all face towards that of direction, in the front and rear of which they, after facing, then file, to regain their relative positions, and perform this, as already explained in the preceding where a similar charge in the situation of an open column is described as effected on a fixed point.<sup>82</sup> It is, however, to be remarked (as before mentioned), that whenever, as in the present instance, the immediate recovery of the line is intended, the division immediately opposite and in front of that denominated for guidance must, when taking up its new station, leave a double distance both for itself and for that operated upon (*fig. 253*).

" When the alteration is effected on a flank division, and the extremity of the line becomes the intersecting point, a marker is placed at 20 or 30 paces beyond that flank; that company is then wheeled forwards or backwards, but always outwards into the new position, and when posted, wheeled back on its inward flank so as to stand perpendicular to the new line with its pivot on it. When it recurs, therefore, on the right flank company, it is first wheeled forwards to, or backwards on the right in the new alignment, and then wheeled backwards on its left; and if the movement be on the left company, it is first wheeled forwards or backwards on the left, and when placed, also wheeled back on the right to take up its column position. On the same principle is the centre platoon, when the acting point, first stationed and wheeled with its pivot on the alignment before the remaining parts of the line break into column, and are put in motion.

<sup>82</sup> See chap. vi. § 10.



Were the position distant and in the continuation of the alignment occupied, after wheeling so as to convert the body into a column led by the flank to which the motion is intended, the whole, stepping off under that formation, move until the head division arrives at a distance short of its own front from the point at which its outward flank is to rest ; on reaching thither, the column is halted, and the extended position regained by the divisions performing the quarter circle ( *fig.* 254). Yet this would be the case only were the line to face to the pivot side, for, were it to face to the contrary way and reverse flank, the column remains in motion, and the successive formation becomes the appropriate evolution ( *fig.* 255).

In the taking up of a distant position, whether perpendicular, oblique, or parallel, the following rules present themselves : 1st, the line is invariably to break to that hand, towards which the new position outflanks the old one (B, *fig.* 133) ; 2nd, where the outflanking is immaterial, the column will generally face to the side where the two lines, if prolonged, intersect (A *fig.* 133). Where both the outflanking and the intersection point out a same wing to lead, the manœuvre will become easy from the coincidence, but where, in opposition, the outflanking is towards one side, and the intersecting point towards the other, although the latter must generally give way, some management will be required to check the rear from hurrying into the new alignment before the head has entered,

which, from its having then less ground to move over, is to be apprehended.<sup>90</sup>

The battalion, now converted into an open column, proceeds to its intended ground, where on arrival it manœuvres according as it approaches the same by the spot its front, its rear, or any central division, is to be stationed, as well as according to the side the line is meant to face; both circumstances which here influence performance. Yet as those objects have been fully treated, when the formation of the line from column was under disquisition, a movement to which the present evolution bears every resemblance after the line has been broken, and the divisions have been wheeled from the extended into the successive formation, any attempt at fresh description would degenerate into repetition.<sup>91</sup>

<sup>90</sup> The reasons for those directions are explained, chap. vi. § 10.

<sup>91</sup> See chap. xi. § 3. It is hardly incumbent to retrace to the memory, that where operating on the leading division, the successive formation by divisions, or the oblique echelon, may occasionally suit the purpose of presenting a line. An observation which relates to the column when it takes up an alignment by the regular entry from the rear of the position, and which, though it carries somewhat the appearance of being more speculative than important, is still not improperly noticed, is that where the wheels are effected to the pivot side, the column is ordered to halt as the last division circles in *fig. 292 A*; but that, where the alteration is effected to the reverse flank, the delivery of the same command must be heard, before, and the instant the one preceding the last is seen on the line; that behind it and which closes the column, will then have to face and to file into its situation, instead of gaining it by wheeling; was this omitted, the true ground would not be occupied, and the

From the preceding it will plainly recur, that two, nay, even three battalions, may, after wheeling into column, by the facing and the filing of their divisions gain a position, parallel or nearly so, and that where the straight march is somewhat to be deviated from, the chief, by conducting the inward flank and neighbouring division, may obtain an inclined position without any particular caution for it;<sup>92</sup> yet those flank movements are seldom applied to on service and from their difficulty always better avoided.

When the operations of the open column are extended to the movements of the line, and the new and old positions intersect and cut each other; the battalion immediately acted upon behaves as described for the single corps, while the others, in separate columns, move separately to their adjutants, who mark the rear of their ground, or leaving him aside, proceed where their heads are to rest, and either take up their positions by the echelon movement, or, after gaining their stations in column, complete the formation by wheeling into line: in the latter case, every battalion is to await to perform its conclusive circular movement till three divisions of the corps in its rear have their pivots properly fixed on the new alignment.

When this evolution takes place on a flank company, the remaining divisions of the same corps

column be removed to the front, the excess of the breast of that last division, as a view of B. *fig.* 292, will render obvious.

<sup>92</sup> Column flank march, chap. vi. § 6.

face and file into their situations, while the other battalions apply to the march in open column (*fig. 256*); but when the alteration is central, the divisions of both adjacent battalions may, perhaps, as well as those of that immediately performed upon, step to their new ground by the flank march (*fig. 257*); with the exception of those three, the rest of the battalions conform to the general practice, and have recourse to the progress in open column.

It is an invariable rule whether the battalion act alone, or several corps operate in conjunction, that the divisions are all invariably to break into column, so as to stand all faced towards that selected to direct; and this being now the second time the principle is noticed we shall unfold the reasons which have led to this injunction. Were the line, for instance, wheeled so as to present a single column, and the divisions to front all to the right or to the left, those preceding that operated upon would, when taking up their new ground, have to regulate their dress as well as their distance from the rear, a slow and inconvenient mode of ascertaining those particulars, which is obviated by the rule laid down; since the divisions and corps placed before the regulating point by it, experience no greater difficulty than those situated behind, as both execute to their front and in the same manner.

In the central formation of the line, both the flanks of the central directing battalion should be marked; when the adjutant, therefore, is himself

on the right, a field officer, or the serjeant-major, should be dispatched to take his station on the left, so as to assist the markers of the left wing to take up their ground.

When a distant alignment is to be taken up, the evolution is conducted as described for the change in the position of an open column, from which the movement solely differs, by the wheel which precedes and concludes the manœuvre, first to convert the line into column, and then, after the new alignment is gained, to relinquish again the column in order to recover the line.

Thus, were the new position in the continuation of that before occupied, the line breaks into an open column, the markers m, n, o (*fig. 131*) take post; adjutants assume their stations, and while on the march successively relieve each other, as already noticed,<sup>93</sup> till the column is halted to wheel up, or if the front be to the reverse flank, is kept in motion, and enjoined to apply the successive formation.

The facing and filing of divisions seldom admissible for an extensive force, will hardly permit the removal into a parallel position of a considerable line, to be effected otherwise than by the open column. The battalions, however, while separately stepping to their adjutants, who, previously detached, display the points they are to arrive at, may, by keeping, while in progress, their heads dressed

• <sup>93</sup> Chap. vi. § 5.

with the regulating battalion (here always a flank one *fig. 57*), by the commander, who conducts the march of the latter, and of the battalion immediately next to it (those following complying with the motion), on the same principle as for the flank march of divisions in the single corps, be gradually led into an oblique direction. On approaching the new *alignement*, the battalions should, however, no longer be restrained in their course, each step independantly to its mounted officer.<sup>94</sup>

<sup>94</sup> This mode of operating in a line of contiguous battalion columns may suit many occasions, and by the chief commander, who regulates the flank and the neighbouring corps, the whole may be easily led along any curve. Under this position, the distances betwixt the divisions may be either preserved, or they may be closed up, as deemed advisable; when, in open columns the battalions will generally step to their mounted officers, already posted on the line, or proceed to the spots their heads are to rest; and if in close columns after doubling up to grand divisions, they will be in readiness to deploy when reaching the *alignement*.

At the battle of Kampen, the allied army, under the Duke of Brunswick; thus advanced in columns of battalions, and Baron de Jomini, who seems to think this the first instance in which troops were so brought to the field of action, appears inclined to favour this disposition, from the facility it affords on the march, and readiness it presents in completing the line,—“Particularly,” says he, “if the formation had taken place by grand divisions.” (Jomini says here *division*, which must be understood grand division, as the appellation of *pelotons* is equivalent to what we denominate division or company; two *pelotons* form a *diviston*, see French formation). In 1792, the experiment was revived by General Kellermann, who, when threatened by the late Duke of Brunswick, on the heights of Gizanconrt, thus placed his infantry. As the Prussian commander,

Had the whole continued in a general column, and thus proceeded from the old to the new situation, the attentions noticed as incumbent, both for the march under that disposition and subsequent formation from it must, as a matter of course, be attended to ; while the variety resulting from arrival on the new ground, by the spot destined for the head, the rear, or any central point would merely distinguish the performance.

Were a column, therefore, to join its ground by the place destined for its head (*fig. 130*), the leading battalion would have to face and file by divisions into its situation, and the other corps, in separate columns, to step to their respective adjutants, or to the places their heads are to rest.

however, relinquished his design of attack, the merit or demerit of the manœuvre remained unknown ; it was, therefore, not before General Dumouriez employed it at Jemappe, that owing to the favourable issue of that battle, it rose in reputation, and following the impulse of the innovating spirit, so characteristical of the French revolution, it was designed to act the counterpart in tactics to the novelties which had been introduced into all the branches of civil and religious institutions. Under the specious name of a new system in the infantry movements, it was much extolled for a time, but that the gloss which victory spread over it soon wore out seems evident from the disuse in which it fell, and the silence respecting it, which is observed in the subsequent engagements. It was, however, since resorted to by the French at Ocanna, in which battle the first attack against the Spanish right, under General Laval is described as having taken place under that formation. The successful attack of General Robinson's brigade of the fifth division, against the village of Gamarra, on the extreme right of the French at Vittoria, was likewise made under that disposition.

Were the position approached by the rear, the successive wheel of the divisions would be the mode of entering the alignment (*fig. 131*); and a mixed operation that partakes of those preceding would result, where it a central point (*fig. 132*); the head divisions in turn, would circle in, till that stationed at the point acted upon had wheeled into the alignment, when the rear divisions of the battalion partly entered, as well as those of the next corps, take post by facing and filing, and the remaining, in separate battalion columns, move to their adjutants, or, if they prefer, to the places where their respective leading divisions are to stand. Were the division of the column to be fixed at the point of entry ascertained before, time may be spared by the battalions in rear of it, instead of continuing in the processional march, so soon as the head has entered, disengaging to step at once individually over the shortest tracks that lead to their position.

The parallel situation, by favouring a central formation of the line still admits of a third expedient; that shewn in *fig. 284*, which, where secure against interruption, and, where under no particular apprehension of attack, may not unfrequently offer advantages.

Where the line taken up is in a perpendicular position to that occupied before, the increase of front does not influence the mode of transition, which is perfectly similar for a single battalion as where several of them act in conjunction; and if the new



line be oblique, as it generally and almost constantly results from the march and formation of the open column, the execution again presents no difference here from what has been already related where those movements are applied to the removal of a column into a parallel situation.

It now remains to be remarked that, in all changes in the position of a line derived from the movements of the open column, the primitive order and relative situation betwixt the corps is kept unaltered, whenever the new line, whether it be to the front or to the rear of that relinquished, faces to the same side as before; but that, whenever the new line is turned to the contrary way, and fronts to that which was the rear of the former position, from it an inversion arises betwixt the battalions.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>25</sup> This rule, which is general, will, it is presumed, much assist in determining the modifications which result from the various alterations in the positions of a line, and supply the number of examples Major Palmer has been obliged to refer to in illustration of those differences. However, to unfold the subject more fully, I have been induced to enumerate the following particulars which may lead to distinction in the present manœuvre.

*First,* The original order amongst the battalions is preserved whenever the new line faces to the same side as the old; but that order is invariably inverted when the new line faces to the contrary way and former rear; as the battalion before on the right is then brought on the left, and that before on the left is brought on the right by the evolution.

*Second,* Whenever the new line faces towards the old line, whether it preserves the same front (as it does when to the rear), or is brought to front to the former rear (as it does when the new line is advanced); the wheels of the divisions, when the entry is by

This, which is easily explained from the separate march of the corps to their relative positions, does not subject the latter case, however, to the least inconvenience, as it is the regular situation betwixt the corps which is merely affected by it, whilst the original arrangement within every battalion is left undisturbed.

### *Echelon.*

On reflection, it will recur, that the march in line and the wheel in a single body, would, by themselves, suffice to answer all alterations in the position of a body of troops, had the difficulty which attends the first, and the still greater intricacy which belongs to the latter, as well as the defect of promptitude revealed in both, not in thwarting their use almost to exclusion, invited the assistance of easier expedients to supply their places. Of those substituted, it must be allowed, that none retain so much their original character, and assimilate so near to the primitive movements as

the rear of the position, are on the pivot flanks, but if the new line face outwards and from the old line, whether the new line front to the same side or former rear of the old line, the wheels of the division are on the reverse flanks (*fig. 301*).

*Third*, If the wheels are to the pivot flanks, and the adjutants mark the rear, the alignment is entered, and the battalion columns are halted as their last divisions wheel in; but when to the reverse flanks, as the wheels are performed when still at a platoon distance from the adjutants, and they are left behind by the circular motion, the battalions are halted when the divisions preceding their last enter on the line, and the rear divisions are then faced and filed with their pivots close upon their adjutants (*fig. 292*).

the echellons, for in both the direct and the oblique, the march in line and the wheel are readily retraced; and so particularly striking are they in their results, that, whilst the direct echellon may be classed amongst the various modes of advancing in line, the oblique, particularly when the alteration is on a fixed point, may not improperly be considered as the mere circular evolution, performed in parts to facilitate execution.

So nearly related it will immediately appear that those echellons must suit in all cases where the march in line, or wheel, if less difficult, would admit application; but, in retaining the features, they also betray some of the inconveniences of their parent evolutions; for, if the immediate difficulty of performance ceases, and the operations are much alleviated by them, they do not provide against the defect of requiring an open ground for execution, which obstruction still remains frequently to impede their performances.

Proceeding with our remarks to what refers to the oblique echellon, as the mode in which the formation into line is accomplished has been previously mentioned, we shall confine ourselves by observing,

*First*, That where on a fixed point a line may by its application be advanced or thrown back on either flank, as well as wheeled to the right or to the left, on any of its central points,<sup>90</sup> and that in all those cases the division acted upon, is first stationed

<sup>90</sup> See chap. ix. § 5.

and the others wheeled forwards or back half the number of paces so as to stand under half the angle of that first posted, and then brought up, or, if the position be retired, faced about and brought back to their places in the alignement.

*Second,* An advanced or retired line may be likewise thus taken up by the whole, that are at first placed under half the arch of the new position, and thus, with their inward flanks placed on the diagonal, moved straight forwards to the new ground; where on arrival the leading division takes post by doubling its arch, and the others, which remain as they were, move up to form on it.<sup>97</sup> From the very nature of the direct echellon, its application to the taking up of a parallel line will readily present itself (*fig. B. 290*).

#### *File Movements.*

The fourth expedient, enumerated to fulfil the intention of a change in the position of a line, is the disposition in file the various applications of

<sup>97</sup> Chap. ix. § 5. In the formation of the oblique echellon, as the divisions move up or back into the alignement under half the angle of that acted upon, and on which they are to form; had the leading division (that supposed to be operated upon), on reaching the new position, been obliged to wheel more or less paces to gain its position in the alignement than it did before, to take up its oblique position for the march, or to wheel back; those in rear, would have to gain their relative and corresponding situations under half the angle before they join the line; and they would likewise have to fall back half the number of paces they at first took to gain the obliquity on the march, had the leading division, without altering its position, moved straight forwards into the alignement.

which to the removal of troops, already illustrated, will leave no room for further explanations,<sup>98</sup> unless it be observed here, that although all the evolutions given under the head of formation from file are, strictly speaking, to be employed, their use will be unfrequent from the inaccuracy they betray in performance; where the execution is still confined to one, two, nay even three battalions, they may occasionally be resorted to, particularly where on a fixed file, either flank or central, a line is, after facing, thus removed into a new perpendicular or oblique alignement (*fig.* 227, 228, 229).

When it is the perpendicular position which is the alteration designed, the intention may also be obtained by the combined movement, shewn in *fig.* 291, in which the flank division immediately wheels the quarter of the circumference, while the remaining, still in line, oblique so as to take post successively; as every division has sufficiently inclined to gain, with its inward flank, its proper station on the line, it wheels to take up its ground. This method, first devised by Major von Mosch,<sup>99</sup> a Prussian officer, though here represented to the right is equally susceptible of a left execution, and by one wing facing about even admits of the central performance. The constant preservation of the line, which remains in

<sup>98</sup> Chapter x. § 2.

<sup>99</sup> *Appendice du septième livre monarchie Prussienne*, plate 69, figure 155, and explanation, *Werkamp's Versuch*, page 287, fig. 24, he calls it the invention of a Prussian officer, General Scharnhorst *Handbuch*, vol. iii. § 146,

its intireness is the benefit alleged in support of the expedient, and the manner seems countenanced by Mauvillon, who described the throwing of the extremity of a line in flank or in rear of an opposed army, as a fair opportunity to challenge its use: but, he adds, that four should be the utmost number of battalions, thus allowed to operate, nor, says he, should the angle of 45 degrees be much exceeded.<sup>100</sup>

Having thus terminated the elucidation of the evolutions more commonly adopted, to effect the alterations in the position of a line, I shall now bestow some attention on those modes which, from being restricted to particular occasions, are less general in their applications.

The first of these, designed for a central change of the line, admits of the two-fold execution of its being a flank or a central division of a central battalion which regulates; if the latter be the case,

<sup>100</sup> In the Saxon infantry, when the formation is by files, and on a fixed point oblique, or perpendicular, the flank man at the intersecting point immediately faces into the alignement, and after the distant marker or markers are thrown out, the line is obliquely advanced so that every individual of the front rank has sufficiently inclined, on gaining his position; to take post by merely facing into it, and by dressing on those already on the line. This manner of executing exhibits a similar advantage to that proposed by Major Mosch (*fig.* 291), namely the preservation of the line during performance. As however such a movement will hardly be required, and still less be attempted, when so close upon an enemy as to render this constant formation of any consideration, the alleged benefit seems after all unprofitable; of the two, that by divisions, as more regular, is however preferable. Scharnhorst, *Handbuch*, vol. iii. § 145.

the line breaks into an open column, so that the divisions all face that denominated to act upon (*fig. 293*); this latter is then situated in the new direction and points a-head are ascertained to guide its march; thus prepared, it moves forwards, followed by the divisions in its rear, and by those of the same battalion in front, which, in a double column, step a-breast of the former, leaving about a space of four paces to separate the two columns. As the directing division reaches its destination, the whole body is halted, and those divisions which have moved a-breast face outwards to file a-head of the column but facing it; the division immediately opposite to that which conducted the march, in taking post, provides for the double distance the subsequent wheeling into line renders requisite. The remaining corps, still on the line, then step off, and, as heretofore, in separate columns proceed to their adjutants, or field officers, who display their positions. Those mounted officers, however, here await till the column is halted and the regulating division at its post, before they take up their ground, which they could not ascertain with any degree of accuracy before the point of *appui* is truly determined.

Were a flank division of a central corps, instead of a central division, nominated for guidance (*fig. 294*), no material dissimilitude would distinguish the performance, which then merely differs from the preceding in the divisions of the next battalion in front instead of the divisions a-head of the

same corps, that become those appointed to constitute the double column, and which, after the motion ceases, would have to face and file in front to gain their position a-head. Were it preferred, however, the divisions meant to march a-breast, might, instead of it, be thrown in front of that regulating so soon as it is placed in its new line of march, and, after counter-marching in file, lead the van while in progress. As the named division to direct arrives at its post, the whole are halted, and the corps not on the line perform as before explained.

In observing *fig. 293*, and *294*, the character of this manœuvre will be discovered to consist in the removal of troops into an advance, or, perhaps a retired oblique, and its execution be found equivalent to the double operations of an inclined advance and central change in the position of a line. Amongst other applications, it was the movement referred to by the late Rules and Regulations, when the second line complied with the alteration of a first on a fixed point of the position.<sup>101</sup>

<sup>101</sup> On the same principle all the divisions in front might have been brought a-head, and, after they have been counter-marched, lead the advance of the column. By the means here proposed may an oblique or perpendicular line, either to the front or rear of any central point be taken up, provided attention be merely had to wheel and station the regulating division, so as always to head that wing, which of the two is the nearest to its position in the new alignment. When the movement is, therefore, to the front, and the new line is to face towards the left of the old, or the movement



The second manœuvre is designed for a line, which, parallel to the enemy, is meant to be removed into an oblique, facing its flank (*fig* 296), and, consequently, to front the ground from whence it came.

As the regular movement and central entry, as described before, would here become objectionable, by leaving the rear for a protracted period within the enemy's reach, which is particularly to be avoided in the present instance, from its being the very flank designed to be refused; to obviate this inconvenience, it is proposed, when thus in proximity to an unfriendly force, for the battalions, except the two or three a-head, to break off the instant the leading corps of all enters the alignment. To illustrate this, by the instance produced in the late Rules and Regulations (part iv. § 186), let it be supposed that six battalions thus manœuvre, and the division to be posted at the intersecting point, is known to be the first of the fifth battalion; as the head wheels in, the third and fourth (as the battalions to be placed beyond the spot entered by), separate to assemble in close column, a little behind the same point of entry at *f*, ready to

to the rear and the new line to face to the right of the old position, the regulating division must wheel on its left backwards into column, and it must step a-head of the left of the line. But were the new position either to the front so as to face to the right, or to the rear so as to face to the left of the former line, that division would have to wheel back on its right, and to take post in front of the right wing (*fig*. 295).

follow the two leading corps when on the line, and, by resuming the open column, to gain their positions, in which they are naturally brought as the head is arrested. The fifth and sixth also instantly diverge to step to their adjutants fixed on the alignement; the former halts so soon as its leading division arrives at d, its known place of occupation.

This movement presents advantages whenever the division to stop at a central point of entry is known, since, without adverting to the particular circumstance of withdrawing the rear from the imminent danger to which it is otherwise exposed, it both lays claim to a speedier and an easier performance, from the corps which, by themselves, unconstrained at once step to their positions the instant the head reaches the intersecting point, and thus, without awaiting till those in front have taken post, proceed to their stations in the new alignement; when completely formed, the whole may either wheel up, or move on to gain ground in the prolongation. Yet, for a first line, the occasion for such a manœuvre seemingly fails, nor could its execution be well attempted in the immediate presence of an antagonist, unless, under cover, it might be accomplished unperceived. A few battalions might, however, thus more unfrequently operate, and, by this manœuvre, be brought on the flank of an opposed army before the design, while in progress, had been properly understood.

In the evolutions of a second line, this movement is of a more frequent recurrence.

Another manner I shall now conclusively elucidate is, that recommended by General Count Von Lindenau as a substitute for the common mode of changing the position of a line on a central fixed point: questioning the utility of such a manœuvre altogether, and adverting to the improbability for a whole line to be ever unexpectedly attacked by a line on its flank, the general much deprecates (should it ever be called for on service) the way in which it is commonly practised, which, he says, is long, difficult, and particularly objectionable, from the very threatened wing which, faced about, is under a position so ill calculated to impress confidence, and in the proximity supposed, compelled, for a considerable space of time, to perform under the constant apprehension of attack, and if so, of certain destruction; and yet, he conclusively observes, how can it be well avoided, for, if you keep your cavalry, the only force you can any way depend upon for defence in a body, the opponent, by dividing his, will certainly, somewhere pierce through your line, and if you attempt to disperse your own, he will infallibly succeed by mustering a stronger body in some particular spot.<sup>102</sup> To re-

<sup>102</sup> General Lindenau (*Traité de la grande tactique Prussienne*, chap. xi.), after explaining the common mode of accomplishing a central change of the line on a fixed point, as may be seen in *fig. 297 c*, decides this manœuvre altogether, 1st, on the ground of im-

medy those evils, he wishes the movement not to be performed throughout the line, but only for

probability of its ever happening on service, and then, if so required, from its inefficiency and mode of execution. Admitting the possibility for a column to be surprised a-head, which formation, he says, pre-supposes being in search of an enemy, and therefore, by implying ignorance respecting its true position, may, from neglect or other causes, render such an unexpected attack admissible, he cannot conceive how this can ever apply to a line which is not taken up before the opponent is seen, or his disposition is at least ascertained. Nor can the locality of the ground be well drawn in favour of the supposition, for, if it be an open country which, from the extended position supposed to be taken up, is here more than probable, the suggestion of a perpendicular attack on a flank is inadmissible, and if it be an intricate country, without adverting to the unfrequency of being in line, the quarter wheel by wings will, he says, certainly not be the movement resorted to in preference to the occupation of some strong position. which the nature of such a ground can hardly fail to offer, and if met with, will enable the surprised army to arrest the assailant, and give time to the troops to draw into a more favourable disposition. But were, after all, such an alteration on the centre desired, nothing can be more absurd, he alleges, than the expedient employed, for, if it be better than that hitherto practised, and where, instead of on the middle, the change was made on a flank B, it is merely preferable so long as it is compared with the last a worst manœuvre. Enumerating the different defects this procrastinated evolution betrays, the Count principally insists on the absurdity to cause the men of the threatened wing to step to their position with their backs turned to the advancing enemy, and to be so kept for a length of time: he also observes that, were the manœuvre practicable, it would, in itself, lead to the very flank exposure attempted to be avoided, as the enemy would certainly not have failed to throw some troops opposite the old front, to conceal his design and favour his march against the right or left, and these, during progress, or after conclusion, be most favourably situated to threaten

the threatened wing to effect the change by itself; thus, for instance, considering a a (*fig. 297*), to be a line of ten battalions, obliged to present a front in m m, on account of an enemy that appears in f f, the right wing, according to his manner, is immediately to perform the alteration on its own centre, and, after taking up the line m m, to move back into the retired position n n, while the 4th and 5th battalions are marched along p p, and the three in rear along q q, to take up the stations they occupy in the figure, and thence to manœuvre according to circumstances. The author, in behalf of the innovation, alleges that, supposing ten battalions to occupy 1600 paces, the movement he describes will demand no more than 980 paces for conclusion, and even a line be presented after 600 are performed, while 1200 paces would have been required by the ordinary mode of proceeding. General Scharnhorst, however, here observes<sup>103</sup> that, as by the echelon the divisions step over the chord and not the circumference, the inference he draws is wrong as to time, since the change would be

an extremity of the new line; finally, he condemns the manner in use from the line that in it operates in its entirety, and in a single body, which he deems peculiarly injudicious in the present instance, as the successful attempt of the enemy, on any part, must inevitably throw the whole into confusion, it is, therefore, particularly to counteract the latter fault, that he proposes the movement shown (*fig. 297, A*), in which, as the wings act separately, the objection of connexion throughout is considerably obviated.

<sup>103</sup> See *Handbuch*, vol. iii. § 148.

fulfilled in 1130 paces, and not in 1200, as he pretends; he also remarks, that, according to the common movement, the centre is sooner formed, and sooner capable of acting; but he still admits the probability of General Lindenau's manœuvre meeting with its application; besides, it must be acknowledged, that even so, the formation in 690 paces is evidently a shorter expedient than where 1130 are indispensable, and although the surmise of the Prussian officers does not altogether remove the defect of attempting to present a parallel line; which when attacked in flank is always objectionable, the evil is so far palliated, that one half of the corps are left to the disposal of the chief. Had that officer, even somewhat further diverged from the beaten path, and confined the immediate central change to two or three, instead of five battalions, the half of the operating line, his proposed evolution would still lay a stronger claim to eligibility.<sup>164</sup>

The changes in the position, when under the extended formation, are, by the French, accomplished when forwards on the principle of the oblique echelon (*en avant en bataille*), and when to the rear by the evolution they distinguish by

<sup>164</sup> General Jomini in his observation on the the battle of Rosbach (vol. i. chap. v. *Grandes opérations militaires*), takes occasion to expose the defect attempting to present a parallel line, when a column is surprised a-head, and thinks, with Tempelhoff, that the deployment should merely then be confined to the vanguard and the brigade a-head; the rest, says he, should manœuvre so as to take the enemy himself in flank.

the name of *faire face en arrière*.<sup>105</sup> When central the execution is, by their Reglement, confined to a flank division, the right of a central battalion when the left is to be brought up, and the left flank of a central battalion when it is the right that is moved forwards: the chief commander, in either case, begins by properly placing the division of direction, and then leaving the corps to which it belongs in line, he wheels all the other battalions into two open columns of platoons, both fronting towards the intersecting point (*fig. 261*); he then, likewise, fixes in the new position, the division immediately facing that directing the movement (and which, of course, must be the flank division of the next battalion), and places it so that, after formation, the distance of 20 mètres ordered as an interval be preserved between them. Thus fully prepared, he follows it by putting the whole in motion, when all performing at once and together, the regulating corps forms by the movement they call *changement de front*, which corresponds to our echelon from line; the battalion immediately opposite faces and by platoons files into its new situation by the movement called *faire face en arrière*; and the others, except those two, in open columns march to their ground where, according as they reach it by the front or the rear, they take

<sup>105</sup> *Evolutions de ligne*, 430—450, the movements here alluded to, both the echelon and *faire face en arrière* are described, chap. xi. § 3.

post by the oblique echelon, or by the movement of *faire face en arrière*.

When the alteration does not amount to 90 degrees, or nearly so, the neighbouring battalion to that regulating, which is advanced by the movement, performs like it; a mode of operating viewed as more congenial from the proximity it stands to the new line, into which it consequently, takes post without first relinquishing the extended position. Were the extremity of a line to direct the alteration, the whole would have to perform as explained for a wing in the central movement; the particular of the next battalion to that directing, which is to remain in line, and merely to move up or back without abandoning the line position, is equally attended to when the change does not amount to the perpendicular.

The French Regiment adds, that when two battalions are posted on the line, the fire may commence, but this is not to excuse the colour-bearers from keeping their advanced stations as dressers, in which they are to continue until the formation is completed<sup>106</sup>; the *guide généraux* are, however, then withdrawn. What is here said respecting the French, likewise stands good for the troops of the Netherlands.<sup>107</sup>

In the Prussian service these alterations are generally effected by the march and the movements of the

<sup>106</sup> When they receive the command *drapeaux à vos places*, chap. xi. § 3.

<sup>107</sup> R. I. der N. *Linie evolutten*, 432—452.



open column; a peculiar manœuvre is, however, described for the directing corps when, on a fixed point, it recurs on the centre; <sup>108</sup> a serjeant is brought in front, and another in rear of the front colour-bearer both at a platoon distance from him, to determine the new alignment, in which distant points may, likewise, be ascertained or marked; the retiring wing is then faced about, and the caution delivered, at which latter, the whole of the covering serjeants step on the line, where, facing all towards the centre, they mark the outward flanks of their respective platoons; at the word *march*, the men instantly step off into the desired position; those advanced are halted by their *zuge*. (platoon) leaders when they arrive at their own non-commissioned officer, while those whose movement is to the rear, are allowed to pass them before they are ordered to resume their proper front: as the eyes are, during the circular motion, kept to the colours, those of the right wing, on completion, are enjoined to change their sight from the left to the right, to enable their commanders to effect what correction the dressing may require.

This movement, frequently demanding a rapid execution, will often take place at a small trot (*trabe*), or double quick, as we call it; when so, the two centre divisions must, however, not exceed the regular quick time, as, by precipitating their steps beyond it, they would compel the wings to

<sup>108</sup> P. R. absch. iii. kap. v. § 9; they call this evolution *achs-schwenkungen*.

too great a hurry, and probably drive them into a complete run, which is to be avoided.

When several battalions thus perform, they, with the exception of that at the standing point and operated upon, are thrown into an open column, and under that formation, marched to their stations in the new line; whether they are to proceed in a general column, or in several, and in the latter case, in how many of them are considerations left to the discretion of the chief, who, himself is to be guided by the existing circumstances.<sup>109</sup> On approaching the intended alignment, leaders of battalions are enjoined to move to their ground by the shortest way.

The Austrian Reglement enumerates where the ground admits, six different changes in the position on a fixed point (*fig. 296*),<sup>110</sup> namely, where on the right the line is brought, 1st, forwards; 2nd, back, where the same evolutions are repeated to the left, and where on the centre, the line is faced to either side. To accomplish each of these, three modes are offered; 1st, the line may face, and by files successively form to the front or to the rear; 2nd, the line may break into an open column of platoons (*zugen*) half companies, companies, &c. which afterwards oblique into their respective situations by the evolutions they distinguish by the

<sup>109</sup> P. R. absch. v. kapt. ii.; they make a frequent use also of the battalion centre masses, as will be seen hereafter.

<sup>110</sup> A. R. haupt. ii. absch. iv. § 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6.

name of *deplourung*; <sup>111</sup> and 3rd, it may, after breaking into an open column, close up and deploy.<sup>112</sup> However, as those manœuvres have already undergone description, and what is here intended may be fully understood by a survey of *fig.* 298, we shall merely notice respecting the two latter, that when performed to the rear and on an extremity of the line, as it is designed for the new position to front inwards and towards the old line, the men are faced about before they are thrown into column, so that the evolution takes place on the rear rank until the desired *alignement* is gained, when the proper front is resumed; but that, when it is central, as by the circular which converts into column, the divisions are all made to front to the same side this the new line is to be taken up, the wheeling into column precedes the facing about of the retired wing, which, then reversed, proceeds to its station, where, on arrival, the true front is recovered.

When the successive formation by files is applied, it may be likewise remarked that, where central, and performed by a whole regiment of three battalions, the central platoons are first fixed before the remaining files are ordered up, and that, where the evolution is confined to two battalions, the right half company of the second is, in the same manner,

<sup>111</sup> This movement, which corresponds to our echelon, is explained in chap. xi. § 3.

<sup>112</sup> For the deployment which they call *aufmarch*, see chap. xi. § 1.

first properly placed by its own captain, to give the new direction.

The Danes generally perform the changes in the position of a line by wheeling, and by running obliquely afterwards into the new alignement; when to the rear they, of course, after wheeling in column, face about to hurry back in the like manner into the desired position.

#### CONCLUSION.

From the very nature and intention of this movement, the importance of expedition will immediately appear as essential, yet, as the shortest means are not always the safest, prudence will often interpose, and from their being the surest call, in preference, for the more protracted expedients. The choice, consequently subservient to the existing circumstances, will here considerably depend on the theatre acted upon, as well as on the degree of proximity to an enemy at which the movement is attempted. Thus, for instance, were the removal into a parallel the evolution desired, where no obstacles intervene, the direct echelon might readily supply the march in line, if the latter could be dispensed with; but, were more frequent interruptions to oppose the use of both, and still to allow the central entry, the double column formed on the two centre companies (*fig. 284*), will strike as suiting the case. Yet, were this latter also impracticable, and the ground much broken, in proportion that it was so would the filing of divisions,

grand divisions, &c. or perhaps the parallel march in separate columns, as seen in *fig. 57*, necessarily be resorted to, unless these again from the parts in them operating asunder becoming also too hazardous, the apprehension of being attacked on the march, would point out the safety of the progress in a single column which, on arrival, manœuvres according as it reaches its ground by the spot its head, rear, or any central part is to be stationed, as the indispensable means to be referred for accomplishment. Thus influenced, every difference in the case will here be productive of a variation in the execution.

The echellons are safe, but they demand much room for performance, besides they are of a partial effect, and merely answer those alterations where the old and new line face to the same side; thus far the open column from the generality of its application seems to establish a stronger claim to priority, which its readiness to comply with all occasions, without incurring additional exposure, concurs in securing. It must be allowed that as a change of a whole line is a movement rarely desired, while a partial deviation in the position of its several parts is more frequently met with, none of the modes mentioned can truly be viewed as debarred of their occasional use; where practicable, and no interruption is feared those compound movements of the nature of that of General Lindenau's (*fig. 297*), or as represented in *fig. 296*, appear the best adapted from the speediness they

admit in fulfilling the design. A peculiar mode of effecting those alterations, which is likewise entitled to regard from the security it promises while in process, is that which I saw performed by the Prussians; it consists in the whole line, which after it is thrown by battalions into central masses (*fig. 299*), under that formation effects its alteration by the corps, that individually and independantly step to their new ground, where they deploy on-arrival. Prepared for defence, the battalions in it are situated for mutual support, and while the shortest way is moved over in the easiest manner, the unfriendly association of an increased danger is throughout avoided. Something like this is found also in Rogniat, when he explains the alterations in the position of a line to result from the three central close columns into which the whole are precedently converted,<sup>113</sup> and of which the one placed in the middle effects its alteration on its own ground (*fig. 300*), whilst the two others regain their relative situations with it, by stepping over the chords of an arch the radius of which he says is 300 toises; he calculates that for an army of 30,000 men, of which the first line occupies from 900 to 1000 toises,<sup>114</sup> the alteration, where it amounted to 90 degrees, will not require above half an hour, yet, unless peculiar circumstances

<sup>113</sup> *Considérations sur l'art de la guerre*, chap. x. marches.

<sup>114</sup> Chap. vii. page 245. in which it is mentioned for such an army of 30,000 men "*le champ de bataille aura ainsi 1000 toises de front, et 600 ou 700 toises de profondeur.*"

plead in behalf of the last mode of operating, it does not seem to possess the merit of that previously described as belonging to the Prussians, the formation from line into column, as well as the relinquishing of the latter to regain the extended disposition, becoming operations of much more considerable duration when the masses are reduced to three, than where their number is increased to that of the battalions, which are made to act singly; while, from their greater depth, less facility on the march as well as greater exposure must evidently be derived.<sup>115</sup>

In dismissing this subject of the changes in the position of a line, I cannot refrain from adverting to the erroneous notions which but too frequently are entertained by military men respecting rapidity of execution. That celerity in the movements and in

<sup>115</sup> The various applications of those lines of contiguous masses, whether at complete distance of a battalion and an interval, or approached at six paces, are obvious; *fig.* 102, shows such a line, which by wheeling its columns has converted into a general column; *fig.* 103 and 104, represent general columns formed in front and in rear of the right mass; the angles (a) might be easily cut by the men who take an half face, and by every mass thus proceeding by the shortest line to its position: how central formations would be effected, may be deduced from the movements on a flank mass.

Were such a line of contiguous columns to face to the rear, the masses would face about; and were a change of front desired according as the intention is to place the pivots on either flank, they would individually counter-march in divisions by files or counter-march in column as shewn in *fig.* 185; by those latter evolutions the relative position of the battalions would be altered, but this as we have already seen is of no consequence.

the operations of war is essential, and that most of the victories have been the result of some quick or unexpected manœuvre, are truths which the concurrent testimony of the historian's pages leaves beyond contest; but this maxim, though fully admitted, is apt to lead to deception in its application; to imagine that quickness in the present instance, applies to the interior evolutions of the battalion, is to misconceive the principle, since the differences but trifling are here such as, unless surprised, can never enter into contemplation. Besides if the disorderly execution, which must inevitably attend where acting under the impulse of a precipitate motion, renders it doubtful, even then and where thus unexpectedly assailed, whether the few minutes gained in completion compensate for the additional confusion with which it must be unavoidably accompanied, and which becomes so momentous from the critical conjuncture here admitted; how decidedly improper must it not be to repeat the experiment, where uncalled for, an unsteady and disorderly evolution is sought for, without any reason to be offered in extenuation to atone for the defects. But let the principle not be mistaken, and from thence be misapplied; and let it not be wrongly imagined that it relates to the manœuvres of the separate bodies; when meant for the higher branches of the art, it refers to the arrangement and disposition of an whole army, or its considerable parts, as well as to the knowledge the commander in chief displays in imme-



diately discerning the proper position, as it suits the ground on which he acts: for were he to place his troops in an alignment, and after occupying the same to discover that they might have been drawn up in a more favourable manner, and successively to repeat those alterations for the better, much fatigue and great delay must accrue from these salutary observations which led to those subsequent improvements in the disposition having been made so late, and not resorted to at once. Though those repeated changes might be accomplished in double quick, nay, even in full speed, the movement of such a force will yet be slow and undecisive, and leave but little hope of success. If we must credit the account published by an Austrian officer,<sup>116</sup> three days were spent at Austerlitz by the Russian general in drawing up his army and in altering the original plan; this, indeed, was losing time, and most precious time it proved also to be, when, on the unfortunate day which followed, he at last engaged; yet the obstruction was not occasioned by the want of swiftness in the manœuvres of the particular corps, nor derived from their mode of execution,<sup>117</sup> for, surely the Russian troops did not display less firmness and bravery on that occasion than they did in

<sup>116</sup> Account of the Battle of Austerlitz, by Major General Stutterheim.

<sup>117</sup> The French mass, which moved on the height of Pratzen, and decided the battle of Austerlitz, advanced at a slow pace below the ordinary cadence.

the subsequent actions, where, under their illustrious sovereign, their efforts were crowned with splendid victories; but their defeat at Austerlitz was owing to the appropriate disposition not having been adopted at first. There are particular instances where the gaining of a certain post may imperiously compel to quicken the pace and to run, if required to anticipate an enemy, who is, likewise, moving for occupation; or where the unexpected approach of cavalry may hurry a battalion or two into a square for protection; but these, how frequent soever they may occur on service, constitute still exceptions to the general rule, and, as exceptions arising from peculiar circumstances, they can never be adduced to discountenance the importance of an orderly execution, which, unless momentous considerations urge departure from it, must be invariably preferred as conducive to secure that steadiness and firmness, on which the strength of the infantry may be safely said to depend. But as, notwithstanding all that can be urged against the unappropriate use of those rapid movements and the caution with which they are to be ever referred to,<sup>118</sup> they will still be countenanced by numberless military men, it will not be useless perhaps to explain, that what so strongly recommends those false notions respecting rapidity is, that whenever there is inability or deficiency of prin-

<sup>118</sup> Both the late Rules and Regulations and the Field Exercise and Evolutions are most explicit on that head, and the principle is equally attended to in the Foreign Reglements.

ciples, velocity must be incessantly referred to; and as the latter requires legs only, while to obviate the former, it requires application, study, and theoretical knowledge, it is fondly resorted to as the cheaper substitute. Yet, let it not be conceived as effectual to supply the want of science, for, like poison, which, equally destructive to the healthy and the diseased, can never be administered as the remedy for the distemper, where troops are thus hurried from one ill chosen position to another, it will, by adding confusion to ill judgment only render the probability of defeat more certain, and its consequences more fatal.

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## SECTION VII.

### *March in Line.*<sup>110</sup>

The march in line chiefly applied for the purpose of drawing troops in the field of action to the close, in order to come in contact, must necessarily influence the issue of the engagement, and render it in great measure dependant on the degree of pre-

<sup>110</sup> R. and R. part iii. March of the battalion in line, § 166; part iv: Movements of the line, No. 7. March in line, § 201, 202, 203; M. and P. attention of the platoon commander. In line, supernumeraries, attention of commanders of battalions in line, dressing in line, intervals. Book of G. O. No. 12, 17, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30.

cision troops have obtained in this momentous part of their performance.

Thus important, as it is no less difficult, the orderly advance, while under the extended position, has always been deemed the perfection of discipline, as such, it was likely to call in play the industry of military men, and various have been the results of their speculations on an object in which no labour can ever be considered lost or unproductive, since every step, every stage, which approximates towards perfection, is certainly rewarded with a proportionate security of victory. It is justly observed in the late Rules and Regulations that, "to bring up troops in an imperfect order is to lose every advantage discipline proposes, and to present them to the enemy in that state that, after his best efforts, he has hope to reduce them."

As the intricacy of execution is here much derived from the perplexing task of preserving union amongst troops spread out on so extensive a surface, the difficulty must necessarily increase as the front grows more considerable. The breaking of the line so as to make the several parts follow each other was therefore devised as, not unlikely calculated to facilitate the motion; it was accordingly alleged that, by confining the movement to a reduced front, in thus promoting regularity within the several parts, the orderly performance throughout the whole might necessarily be secured. But this mode of reasoning, which so often furnishes

the surest means of alleviating the exertions of mankind fails in its present application, from the breaking of the line, the very object to be avoided, becoming here the very means resorted to.<sup>120</sup> The

<sup>120</sup> Amongst the modes partaking of the latter description, the most simple is evidently that already mentioned, where the battalions on the principle of the direct echelon are made to follow each other at the distance of six paces; for while the march is facilitated by it the short space at which they move can hardly be objected to from the instantaneous recovery of the line it admits; were for instance ten battalions thus to advance (*fig. 220*), the last would merely require 54 paces to come up, and therefore have formed even in the ordinary time within the two-thirds of a minute.

The following suggestions of the kind will give an insight as to the speculations on that head. The first of these found in Scharnhorst (*Handbuch*, vol. iii. § 75), is as follows: After the perpendicular has been ascertained in front of the middle of the contro battalion (*fig. 312*), that battalion is advanced six paces on the line A B, leaving its colour-bearer with two non-commissioned officers in the line D E, its former ground, to mark the spot those three centre files stood before, and two other serjeants also to display the positions heretofore occupied by the flank files; the colour, the centre files, and the inward division in every other corps are then moved on the same line A B (the fourth ground division of the battalions on the right, and the first of those on the left). A non-commissioned officer of every division left to the rear is likewise advanced on that first line, to mark in the same its outward flank; while serjeants are in the like manner posted on the line D E, to point out the outward flanks of the divisions advanced into A B. This performance, the proposal of a German officer (*Bellona im 9ten stück*, s. 108), was by him considered as much calculated to facilitate the advance of an extended line, but it seems, however, doubtful, as the additional care here required to keep up the relative positions and distances leaves rather a doubt of intricacy on the mind.

The second proposed expedient is from Count Turpin de Crissé,

direct echelon, where the divisions consist of four or five battalions, and are therefore indepen-

who, in his *Commentaries on Vegetius* (vol. i. livre i. chap. ix. page 138), in reverting to the necessity for a line to march well dressed and together when advancing for engagement, on which he admits the success of an attack considerably to depend, observes this to become however merely important, as the contest commences on collision; and the advanced of a continued line, if of any duration, to be a movement rather precarious; and conceives therefore to promote the order here so very essential, the troops should march on several lines: but premises his explanation by remarking that, without attaching particular merit to this surmise of his, he gives it as a thought which struck him, but which at least deserves trial.

He supposes two battalions of ten companies, comprehending the grenadiers and chasseurs, (light companies), to stand without any interval between them and with the grenadiers on the flanks and chasseurs in the centre (*fig. 313*), he wishes then that at the caution, the grenadiers light, first, and fifth platoons, to which latter the colours are attached, should step out four paces to the front; the second, the fourth, the sixth, and eighth, two paces; and the third and seventh remain on their former ground, so that the whole are now presented on three lines; and so situated that the front rank of the second line is in the alignement of the rear rank of the first, and the front rank of the third line dressed in the alignement of the rear rank of the second, which relative positions are to be preserved while on the march. On the command *halt*, the whole stop, the men awaiting for the word *dress* to re-form, which is accomplished by the second, fourth, sixth, and eighth platoons that move up two, and the third and seventh four paces to join the advanced line: he adds, that under the principle here exemplified for two, a greater number of battalions may likewise perform. It is however, to be remarked that the French author merely intends this, where the ground unfavourable for approach, presents such obstacles as to impede the close contest, as where this is immediately intended, rejecting the inefficacy of the line altogether, he desires the infantry while in

dently capable of defence, may suit where a wing is meant to be refused and a partial attack is designed, but where a certain force is at once to share in an engagement and to act in the whole of its extent, no broken line can ever supply the regular advance in the continued position; nor is the latter any way more intricate in its execution, the preservation of distances, and corresponding situations rendering the march, where the line is thus thrown in parts, if any thing, still more precarious; the flanks by it are besides multiplied, and how short soever may be the period to re-form and complete the line, it is still lost, and that at a time when every moment is urgent, and not an instant can be spared. Troops so situated must evidently either recover the primitive formation previous to their joining the opponent or the attack must be successive, and, if so, destruction inevitable. Now since the regular advance in line must, therefore, be ultimately resorted to, as the formation cannot again be ventured in too great a proximity of the enemy, the march on a single line can after all not be exploded, and why should another movement then be admitted, since it can merely be used at a period when a trifling degree

progress of closing upon an enemy, to double the ranks twice, so as from three to convert on the march into twelve deep.

Those modes of separating the parts of a line while on the march, must not be mistaken for the formation recommended by Jomini (*fig. 2*) where the battalions instead of on a single are brought to act on three lines.

of irregularity becomes immaterial, and when, within the curb of correction, it might easily be remedied; while at the critical instant where every mistake is of moment, and the spark, from being no longer extinguishable, will most likely kindle into general conflagration, the original motion cannot be dispensed with. A movement which cannot be invariably replaced, should not be occasionally substituted, as the unfrequency of practice which must result from it, and additional impression of intricacy it leaves on the mind, can hardly fail to operate unfavourably on its execution.

The utility of the progress in the continued position thus fully established, we shall proceed to the illustration of the various methods in which this movement is conducted by several of the European infantries, and from them finally deduce the principles by which it should be directed; but premise this by adverting to the additional benefit, now derived from the intervals ordered to separate the corps, which, from leaving the battalions both independant in their dress and march, will now, besides what has been adduced in their behalf, be found to obviate the unfavourable influence the faults of one corps would have on the others were the mistakes to run through the whole line.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Chap. i. § 16. Guibert conceives 12 paces sufficient, and so does General Scharnhorst where there are no guns, but if the latter separate the corps he considers 20 paces the proper proportion. When intervals are too small they fail in answering their purpose, but if too extended they present too many flanks, and weaken the line.



*March in Line of British Infantry.*

The commanding officer takes post 10 or 12 paces in rear of the centre, from thence to ascertain the points of march, or to direct a serjeant to run out about 20 paces in front of the centre file, whom he places in the true direction; he then delivers the caution, *the battalion will advance*, on which, the rear ranks lock up, and the directing or centre serjeant (the one placed in the middle of the battalion) takes six paces in the ordinary time along the perpendicular he has observed (by casting his eyes down) to run from the angle formed by the junction of his heels<sup>122</sup> through an intermediate point, which he has either selected or received between him and the distant object, or to the serjeant, if one has been advanced for that purpose; as he halts, after performing those six paces, the non-commissioned officers who covered him in the rear and supernumerary rank, take post on each side of him (*fig. 305*); those three are corrected and fixed by the battalion commander, who, in his instructions to them, is guided by the distant object and central file, or, perhaps, merely by the centre front rank man (the officer, or non-commissioned officer, who has stepped between the colours). Thus in readiness, he follows these preparations by

<sup>122</sup> In the taking of *points de vue* to determine the line of march, the late Rules and Regulations recommended such objects as, not distant, accidentally occur on the ground, as a tuft of grass, a stone, a spot of water, a hedge, &c.

the word *march*, on which the men step off at once and together; the centre serjeant moves on his points preserving most scrupulously his length of pace and cadence; the two serjeants on eachside keep in line with him, and the three centre files, in following the three advanced non-commissioned officers and in retaining both the step and distance with them, establish a parallel base, on which the front rank dresses, by glancing the eyes inwards,<sup>123</sup> but without turning the head too much; the rear rank men cover their file leaders, and the supernumeraries, who step in rear at their appropriate distance of three paces, chiefly bend their attention to see the rear ranks well locked up. Thus is the progress regularly continued, till the word *halt* is heard, when the whole of the individuals for which it is meant, finish the pace at the true length and time, and, after bringing the foot in rear up to the advanced one, remain, right or wrong, immoveable, to await the next command which, where no firing takes place, will most pro-

<sup>123</sup> The march in line is in general better explained and brought under more effectual rules, by the Field Exercise and Evolution, than it was in the late Rules and Regulations. At the caution, the serjeant-major takes post six or eight paces in rear of the centre file, and there "remains steady for 20 or 30 paces, to ascertain, under "the direction of the mounted officer, the squareness and correctness "of the line of march, if no waving or crowding in the line appear "the direction is certainly true, and the serjeant-major will follow "in rear, covering as before." An under officer is advanced on each flank, in line with the front directors, after the manner of the French, eyes are fixed to the front, part iii. § 70.

bably be the requisite direction, *dress*, to remedy any error that, during the march, might have taken place in the alignment.<sup>124</sup>

When several battalions act together (*fig. 306*), one amongst them is appointed that of direction, and such is signified to the line, either verbally or by the signal of a drum : the caution is then heard, *the line will advance*, and repeated ; at it the whole of the serjeants designed to lead, move out six paces ; the three of the regulating corps, as well as those of the adjoining battalion, are immediately situated by the chief commander, or by the officer selected by him to superintend the advance, those of the remaining battalions dress on them. On the command *march*, the corps step off, and, in conformity to the rules deduced where they operate alone, every battalion independently advances, guided by its own directing serjeants ; for, though the movement of all of them is subordinate to that corps named to regulate, this attention to the general union is altogether confided in the chief who conducts the advance of the direction battalion, and in the commanders of corps who, while the remaining individuals, unconcerned and uninfluenced from the

<sup>124</sup> By F. E. and E. in marching to the front, the men are directed to keep their eyes constantly to the front, and to depend for their dress merely on the touch of the arm on the regulating side, each man fixing his sight at some object of his own height, at one hundred yards distance in front ; this principle is preserved throughout the work, part i. § 3, part ii. § 43.

circumstance of acting in numbers, merely abide by their own centre, are themselves to keep in sight the directing corps, the motion of which they view as infallible, and are swayed by in leading their own battalions ; they accordingly order their advanced serjeants to bring up a shoulder to step short, to step out, or to oblique, &c. so as to conform to the general movement.

When the advance is performed by several battalions, their commanders, as where operating singly, ride each ten paces in the rear of its centre file, the adjutant<sup>125</sup> is behind the flank on the side of direction, while the major follows on the opposite extremity. Of those two latter, the former is to acquaint the commander whenever the interval undergoes increase or decrease, that he may, after ascertaining whether the mistake originates with his corps or not, apply if required the proper remedy. The commander of the line is generally posted with the regulating battalion, either in its rear to direct the perpendicular march, or with the advanced serjeants to watch the parallelism. When he is differently engaged, those duties devolve on staff officers purposely appointed to their performance. Generals, in command of brigades, are behind the flank the nearest to the point regulating.

<sup>125</sup> Major Palmer's *Detail of the line movements*, Preliminary remarks, page 200, when the line is to march in front, page 209, a book which, respecting the late British system, may be always safely referred to for its exactness, and most usefully for the clearness with which the movements are described.

On the command *halt* immediately circulated through the line, the injunction is complied with as before explained; the battalions which happen to be in rear are, however, permitted to move up before their obedience is expected. The mode in which the line is then to be dressed, if dressing be the intention, has been already described to be from the centre of the corps, and by each wing, which is situated in the line displayed by its own colours and those of the adjoining battalions (*fig. 22*).<sup>126</sup>

*March in Line of the French Infantry.*<sup>127</sup>

The adjutant-major is first directed to take post 40 paces in front of the centre file (*vis à vis le porte drapeau*), and facing the same, he is there in the true prolongation of the designed line of march fixed by the battalion chief, who himself has removed about 40 paces to the rear, and who now, after placing him, also ascertains over his head and centre file a distant object, should any present itself, and then falls back again about 20 paces, to establish at about 60 in rear of his battalion, two *jalonneurs* a b (*fig. 307*), at 25 paces from the rear rank and from each other, who both face

<sup>126</sup> The several manners of dressing the battalion and line are elucidated in chap. ii. § 8, 9, and 10.

<sup>127</sup> *Ecole de bataillon*, 446—485; *évolutions de ligne*, 304—339; the advance in line is conducted on the same principle by the troops of the Netherlands, *bataillons school*, 457—496: *linie evolution*, 306—341.

him; the colour-bearer in the meantime provides himself, on the line of the thrown out adjutant-major, with two points about 20 paces asunder, and of which the nearest is about 20 paces from him. The necessary preparations now fully completed, the commander delivers the caution *battalion en avant*, at which, the colour-bearer with his two immediate neighbours and the two *guides généraux* step out in the ordinary cadence six paces to the front, the three first straight forwards; and the two latter so as to take post in line with them, but in front of the flank officer on the right and serjeant on the left of the battalion; those in the centre, on leaving their posts in the first rank, are replaced by their coverers in the second rank. The adjutant-major who, through the assistance of the centre file, has now exactly stationed the colour-bearer, relinquishes his advanced situation to assume his proper post while on the march, which is about 12 or 15 paces to the right of the leader of the fourth platoon. The adjutant in line with the thrown out directors, plants himself at six or eight paces on either side of the colour-bearer.<sup>128</sup> On the word *march*, the colour-bearer moves on his points, and takes fresh ones as he approaches and leaves behind those first chosen

<sup>128</sup> Although this is the station appropriated to the adjutant, he is besides expected occasionally to move about 15 or 20 paces to the front, and by facing the colour-bearer, to ascertain whether the latter steps in the prolongation of the line of *jalonneurs* or not, and if not, to rectify his mistake.

and while he attends to the precise length and cadence of step, the two non-commissioned officers on each side are to keep in line with him, but to effect this without turning the shoulders or looking inwards; the *guides généraux*, who are principally by the equality of pace, to preserve their dress with those centre regulators, are never to endeavour to keep in line with each other. The three centre files of the battalion in following those in their front, look straight forwards; the one immediately in rear of the colour, careful to preserve the regular pace, is not to alter the same were he to close upon the colour-bearer, or to increase his distance from him, unless he be directed to the contrary. The leader of the fifth platoon is, by the touch of the arm, to remain in the line of those three centre files, but the chiefs of the fourth and sixth are permitted the inward and occasional turn of the eyes, to keep up the straight alignment with the same three non-commissioned officers posted in the centre, thereby to establish a base by which the rest of the battalion is to dress; those two platoon chiefs are, in this, assisted by the adjutant-major, who warns them of any error he observes in their position, and who equally apprizes the remaining platoon commanders whenever he perceives they are stepping out of the line; those latter are equally allowed the short glance of the eyes towards the centre, to insure regularity as well as to guide their corrections, which are here confined to the men of the platoons on the

inward hand (towards the centre), and restricted to where the faults grow material, while all trifling mistakes are to be left unnoticed, as noise and disorder would inevitably and merely attend continual alteration in the pace. The soldiers are ordered to look straight forwards, and in their dress to be chiefly guided by the touch of the arm; they are further instructed to resist all pressure from the flanks, as well as to remain, if any thing, somewhat to the rear of the platoon commanders, so as not to see the centre which is the directing point. The short and occasional turn of the eyes to the advanced (either the central serjeants, or the *guides généraux*, as their proximity to the former or latter points out), to satisfy themselves that they keep up the true step, is recommended.

When the battalion has advanced 25 paces, a third *jalonneur* takes post by covering those a b at l; as this third is planted, b leaves his station to remove to the rear of l, whom, at the same distance of 25 paces, he covers in the line l a, so soon as the advance of the battalion will permit him to do so: this is successively repeated by a, and again by l, &c. till a cessation of motion removes the necessity for its being continued. Those *jalon-neurs* are properly fixed as they take post by an officer, or non-commissioned officer, who, particularly selected for that duty, follows in rear, and as the third is planted, orders the nearest, as he approaches him, to withdraw. The battalion chief,



without interrupting the line of *jalonneurs*, will generally at about 15 paces follow the centre; were he to observe considerable departure occurring from the track to be pursued, he will announce it by the words *point de direction plus à droite, ou à gauche* (point of direction to the right or to the left), when the adjutant hastens in front to place himself about 40 paces beyond the colour-bearer, where he is properly situated by the battalion chief; the latter then orders the centre file, by advancing the requisite shoulder, to comply with the alteration, and as he gains the new line of march, it is gradually taken up by the colour-bearer, the advanced serjeants, the *guides généraux*, and in fact, the whole battalion, and confirmed by the *jalonneurs*, who are finally removed in the true prolongation by the officer, or serjeant, to whose care they are confided.

When the step is lost, the *chef de bataillon* by uttering the command *au pas* (to the step), conveys his intention for the whole, both officers and men, by the short and immediate glance of the eyes to the central advanced, or *guides généraux*, to retrieve themselves in this particular.

On the principles displayed for the single, are also several corps, when in line, to perform the advance. The line of *jalonneurs*, in rear, however, is then dispensed with, except in the battalion of direction, in which those markers are retained, and placed under the superintendence of an aid-de-camp and the immediate check of the

chief commander, who, to ensure exactness in the line of march, is directed occasionally to face the colour-bearer of that regulating battalion at about 40 paces to the front, and by placing himself in the line of the *jalonneurs*, to ascertain whether the centre file and the advanced persons (particularly the centre one), pursue their true course. When a line of several battalions marches to the front, the *guides généraux* are, in their dress, to be solely directed by their own centre, and to keep in the line of their own colour-bearer and his two sergeants. The battalion chiefs are principally entrusted with the interior regularity of their corps and to watch the intervals. The adjutant major is to look to the dress, and the adjutant, who, in line with the advanced, now invariably moves on the other side of the corps of direction, is to pay attention to the general line, which latter, however, is without too much nicety, and the continual alteration in the pace, merely to be preserved. The leaders of the regiments<sup>109</sup> and brigades, in overlooking their commands, are warned to pay special care to the separating intervals; and the chief of the whole, while his attention is to be particularly drawn to the motion of the directing corps, is to bestow the short respite, which this main duty allows to the general movement.

<sup>109</sup> The French regiment consists of three battalions.

*Advance in Line of the Prussian Infantry.*<sup>120</sup>

Amongst the Prussians, the dressing is, likewise, towards the centre; and of course the eyes in the right wing are removed to the left, yet the men are taught to depend more for the preservation of the line, on the equality of step and light touch of the neighbour's elbow towards the directing side, than to the sight. At the caution *bataillon vorwärts*, the colour-bearer placed in the front rank, with the two non-commissioned officers on each side of him, moves eight paces to the front (*fig. 309*), and when those three have been replaced in their positions in the first, by the colour and non-commissioned officers who covered them in the third rank they (the advanced) are properly placed in a line parallel to the battalion. The word *march* is then delivered, and complied with; the drummers beat the grenadier march through, and as they conclude are relieved by the musick, which is again relieved by the drummers as they finish playing: thus the bands perform alternately during the advance. The commandant who rides in front is accompanied by the regimental drummer, or in the *füsilier bataillon* (light battalions) by the staff bugle. The second staff officer or adjutant, in rear of the centre, is entrusted with the direction of march, and he is to give the necessary aid, whenever the due course is deviated from. It is from the platoon officers, who

<sup>120</sup> P. R. absch. ii. kap. ii. § 1; and absch. iii. kap. v. § 1.

dress correctly on each other, that the preservation of the alignment is thought much to depend; to render this still more efficient, the occasional turn of the head to either side is permitted to them; but wherever any re-dressing of the line is attempted, it is to be effected without noise or bustle, and the correction is to be confined to the files in the immediate vicinity, and within the reach of the voice. From the assistance of the supernumeraries also much is expected.

The advanced colour-bearer, in moving at his points, preserves the equality of pace and cadence: the one immediately in its rear, who follows the precise track he traces out is invariably to keep at the distance of eight paces. The march in line is equally practised in the quick as well as the slow cadence.<sup>131</sup>

At the word *halt*, all remain in their existing positions with the exception of the three advanced, who fall back in the front rank; eyes are moved to the right.

<sup>131</sup> The advance in line in the quick cadence is now also very properly sanctioned in our infantry by the F. E. and E. part iii, § 81. According to the Regulations in force under Frederick the great, as two colours were placed in the front rank next to each other, they were both advanced as well as the two under officers on their sides, but only six paces to the front; the colonel rode about four paces before them. This advanced position in the commandant appears unsuitable, as it debars him of the opportunity to give the proper aid, and renders him liable to check the progress of those thrown out for direction, who move then in his immediate rear. How far the latter inconvenience was felt, a perusal of Saldern's *Tactics* (§ 21 and 39), will satisfactorily evince.

*Advance in Line of the Austrian Infantry.*<sup>132</sup>

When advancing in line, the dressing is, likewise, in the Austrian infantry to the centre, whenever the body that performs amounts, or is above the front of two divisions, but if it be under that portion of the battalion it is a flank that directs the alignement. If a whole battalion operate, at the caution, the colour-bearer and the two subalterns on each side of him step out six paces forwards, as well as the two flank captains; they are replaced in their stations in the front rank by the corporals No. 7 and No. 1 (*fig. 308*); the adjutant in rear directs the progress, but makes the objects which are to determine the advance known to the two officers who move on each of the colour, which is intended to assist them in leading the colour-bearer over his true line of march. The captains thrown out on the flanks, dress on the centre advanced; the one on the left is, moreover, somewhat guided in his position by the one on the right. On the word *march*, the battalion advances; the individuals are to keep their dress by the light touch of the arm, without pressure, upon the neighbour on the directing side, and by the slight turn of the head to the same point; the head is, however, merely permitted to deviate from the straight position as much as it is absolutely necessary to facilitate the preservation of the alignement, and without preventing the men from looking at the same time

<sup>132</sup> A. R. haupt. i. absch. vii. § 1 and 2.

to the front. The *chargen* (officers and non-commissioned officers in the front rank) are to promote the movement by being themselves most careful in their positions, by keeping their shoulders well square to the front, and by being most critically exact in their pace, both as to length and time. From the observation in the Reglement, that when the inward files (those between the centre and the officer) bulk out so as to obscure the directing files, those *chargen* are to ascertain the alignment by a quick glance along the rear it seems that, as a further assistance, the occasional turn of the eyes to the centre is also expected from them; the rear rank men follow the path of their file leaders. No fixed station is given to the commandant, yet, at the first starting off, he will generally be in front, and afterwards, from his frequent call to the interval, he will not uncommonly be found on the flank of direction, yet, occasionally, he will also be seen on the opposite extremity, as that from which the dressing is the best ascertained. The corporals No. 7 and No. 1 are strictly enjoined to preserve the exact distance of six paces from the directors in their front.<sup>133</sup> While

<sup>133</sup> When the Austrian Reglement of 1807 was promulgated by the Archduke Charles, he, with that liberality which is so characteristic of him, requested the different regiments to transmit their critical remarks and objections to the same; as these, with the answers to them, were afterwards published, I took notice of a reflection made by the regiment of *Kaunitz*, that objected to the central colour-bearer when advanced not being replaced in the first rank, which obliged the two corporals 7, while on the march, to leave

in progress, the drums beat a march, and after a pause of 12 paces, renew the tune, unless musick be not relished at the time, when they are desired to discontinue; when the whole regiment acts together, the band of drummers of the several battalions relieve each other. The ordinary time, which is from 90 to 95 paces, is, while on the march, altered to the quick cadence of 120, and the alteration from the latter to the former, is rendered equally habitual to the Austrian soldier.

At the hearing of the command *halt* all stand still, those looking to the left turn their eyes to the right, the advanced, both central officers and flank captains, who stop like the rest, await for the next word of command to fall back in the ranks. When the line consists of several battalions, at the caution the already specified officers of every corps take their six paces to the front, and all of them are brought into a parallel line to that they quitted; the colour-bearers take *points de vue* to direct the march; those of the corps not regulating are, however, told in ascertaining theirs, to select in preference, objects far removed, that, if wrongly chosen, they may, from their distance and inconsiderable angle between the true and erroneous line of march, be less calculated to disturb the general harmony. It is, of those brought forward in the centre, the outward officer from the point of direction who is entrusted with

a space between them. This seems evidently unfavourable, nor was, in my opinion, this objection so satisfactorily answered as most of those offered at the time.

the care of preserving the general alignment, he accordingly looks inwards to keep up the dress with the advanced directors of the leading corps; the inward officer is to pay attention to the direction of march, and to lead the colour-bearer along the perpendicular course; the flank advanced captains dress all on the centre directors of the regulating corps; they are, however, while glancing the eyes to a side to preserve the shoulders square to the front.

The battalion commander is particularly warned against hurry in his corrections, and enjoined to effect all changes on the march gradually; where they are considerable, the whole battalion is to be apprized of it. The commander of the line superintends the advance of the directing corps, and by being precise in discovering the cause of the mistakes, he is to apply in time the appropriate remedy to the existing evil. The parallel line (kept up by the colours, advanced subalterns, and flank captains), deemed very momentous in the execution of this movement is enjoined to be attended to with no small degree of attention. On halting, the previous correcting of this line is conceived, likewise, much to assist afterwards the dressing of the corps.

### *March in Line of the Danish Infantry.*

At the caution, the colour posted in the centre of the battalion, and the two serjeants on each side of him, move out six paces; their coverers in the second replace them in the front rank. At the word *march*, the colour-bearer moves on his two points



under the controul of the adjutant who steps in rear ; the battalion dresses by the centre.

When several battalions move in line, the colour-bearer of the regulating corps is provided with points to direct the march, but those of the others are, in their progress, to be entirely guided by this advanced one of the directing body, with whom they are to remain dressed. The major who, superintending the inward interval, communicates all errors relative to it to the adjutant, who is immediately, on apprizal, by altering the position and direction of march of the advanced colour-bearer, to rectify the mistake.

*March in Line of the Russian Infantry.*

The colour-bearer who is in the centre of the battalion, the two serjeants on each side of him, and the captain of the fifth platoon, all move six paces to the front ; the dressing is by the centre ; the colour-bearer marches on two given objects ; the perpendicular is besides secured by three non-commissioned officers who, behind the centre, cover each other after the manner of the French (*fig. 310*) : those markers, or *jalonneurs*, are situated and regulated by the adjutant who steps in rear of them ; the colonel is in front ; the major watches the interval towards the battalion of the direction. The advance is practised both in the quick as well as the ordinary time.<sup>134</sup>

<sup>134</sup> Although I have had occasion in the preceding, to notice the great exactness with which the first battalion of the Russian regiment of Nerva performed at Maubeuge, in the presence of his

From the modes of execution just described, we may conclude the march in line principally to depend

*First*, On the preservation of the perpendicular direction of march by the means of two *points de vue*, and correct progress on them.

*Second*, On the alignment kept throughout by the advanced directors, and their preserving of the same by dressing on each other, and keeping the equality of pace and cadence.

*Third*, On the parallel base formed by the files of the battalion immediately in rear of those thrown forwards, and their attention to follow exactly the track traced out by those in their front, and to preserve the original distance with them.<sup>135</sup>

*Fourth*, On the dressing of the front rank on the centre files, or the centre division; and on the rear rank men who cover their file leaders.

Besides these which refer to the battalion where it acts by itself, we may add, that where several of them operate together,

*Fifth*, One battalion is selected to regulate, and as such, conducted by the chief, or officer appointed by him to the discharge of this duty.

Royal Highness the late Duke of Kent: I cannot forbear observing here, the great precision with which that corps advanced in line, under both cadences.

<sup>135</sup> The French form here an exception, as their centre files are enjoined not to attend to the preservation of the original distance of six paces, and to keep the true length of pace, unless differently directed.

*Sixth*, The advanced men of the same regulating battalion with those of a neighbouring corps, are to establish a line in which those thrown to the front of the other corps are to dress; with this general line the battalions in rear are to preserve the parallel position.

*Seventh*, That where several corps co-operate, every battalion is still, by itself, to march on the principle displayed where it performs singly, while the attention to keep up the general line, altogether devolves on the general, field, and mounted officers. To the elucidation of the particulars enumerated, we shall now proceed.

### *Preservation of the Perpendicular Line of March.*

The preservation of the perpendicular, is the peculiar province of the centre advanced colour-bearer, or serjeant <sup>136</sup> who, by the means of two *points de vue*, is, while in progress, kept within the straight direction of march, and for further security, moves under the guidance and correction of a field or mounted officer, who himself is removed 10, 12, or more paces to the rear of the battalion to be more adequately situated, by keeping a view over the whole, to determine the line of march in which his corps is to proceed. The reason why the colour-bearer, or central serjeant, is thrown to the front is obvious, as, in the ranks, his motion, continually

<sup>136</sup> The French, the Russians, Prussians, and Austrians, &c. have all a colour to the front, the British infantry, merely a serjeant.

checked by those on his side, would no longer be free, and from being repeatedly thrown out of his position, his line of march could not be depended upon; nor would the intention be better fulfilled were the direction of march entrusted to the three thus thrown forwards, instead of being invested in the one who, in the middle, moves between them; since, were they to step in a different direction, indecision would arise from those in rear not knowing whom to follow, and this create uncertainty in the advance of the centre files those whose steady progress it is of all others, important to secure; thence a continual floating and disorder would inevitably emanate from a want of principle.

The advanced central serjeant, or colour-bearer, is, in his march, to be constantly guided by two objects; that one is not sufficient, a view of *fig. 24* will fully evince, and has been demonstrated in the preceding. Yet, owing to several adventitious circumstances, like thick or foggy weather, points cannot at all times be easily procured; where so situated, the advance must entirely depend on the squareness of position of the shoulders to the front, and equality of step; those objects, therefore, must be insisted upon, and so important have they been considered by some, that General Saldern not only views them as paramount, but in themselves sufficient; and, from the difficulty in selecting those distant objects in the exact prolongation of the line of march, and the deviation from the perpendicular which is frequently derived from their ill selection, he is even induced to re-

commend their disuse, nay, General Von Guidi, who took still greater exception to them, condemns the taking of *points de vue* altogether.<sup>127</sup> Experience, however, does not confirm the theory of those Prussian officers, as, where the march disdains their help and is attempted without objects to guide the direction, their want is immediately felt, and the advance generally irregular. The squareness in the position of the centre advanced serjeant, and his equality of step and time, are evidently materially calculated to promote the orderly progress in line, and are, as such, most indispensable qualifications in the person entrusted with the direction of march, but they will not suffice alone; besides the objections of difficulty in those objects being rightly chosen, and of certainty in deviation from the perpendicular where they are wrongly established, which are urged by General Saldern, seem divested of that importance he attaches to them: errors are here easily discovered after 20 or 30 paces, and if so, easily remedied by fresh points replacing those found defective; nor is the apprehension of not meeting with any better founded, as, within 50 or 80 yards, some will invariably be encountered, as a stone, a tuft of grass, or a spot of water, will here answer the purpose. Both the French and the British Regulations recommend the objects of march not being chosen too remote, and to be at about 25 paces from the

<sup>127</sup> Saldern's *Tactics*, part i. § 37, and General Gaudi's *Instructions*. It is also adverted to in Scharnhorst's *Hanbuch*, vol. iii. § 70.

individual, and 25 paces from each other. The Austrian Regiment, however, enjoins the battalions not of direction to act on a different principle, and by selecting more distant points, attempts to obviate any great deviation in the parallel march to be preserved with the regulating corps; <sup>100</sup> it further observes that, where immediately proceeding against an enemy, the farthest point should be ascertained in its very position. Where the casual aid of a conspicuous distant object, besides those intermediate, can be procured (*z. fig.* 306), it should not be neglected, as in determining the general line, it will much assist to take up those successive and subordinate points.

When the directing colour-bearer or serjeant has, in the first instance, taken his ordered number of paces to the front, he is corrected and properly situated by the battalion chief (or officer appointed to do so from the rear), who, in this, may be guided by the central file, or, perhaps still better by the centre front rank man; by placing both the latter and the advanced person in the true prolongation of the line designed to be pursued, and by taking, at the same time, a view of his corps, he will most effectually guard against great mistakes. That much attention and some practice, are here essential, will evidently appear from the trifling deviation of merely two degrees that after a performance of 1000 paces to

<sup>100</sup> A. R. haupt. i. absch. vii. § 2 to select points in the enemy's line, haupt. i. absch. vii. § 1.

the front, diverges the battalion already 36 paces to a side.<sup>139</sup>

When several battalions advance in line, the lines of march traced out by the whole of the directing sergeants, should be as many parallels. This is the thing as it ought to be ; but, as it will rarely be found to happen, nor is this precision here of much more importance than it is unlikely to be met with, since no material inconvenience arises from their correction afterwards, and so soon as the increase or decrease of an interval on the regulating side, by pointing out the defect, indicates a necessity for it. But, this admitted for the generality of the battalion, it still remains of some consequence for the leader of that of direction not to be so accidental in his line of march, as not only the alleged means of appraisal fails with him, but that all corrections in the line must be delayed until the march of the regulating corps is truly ascertained. In the French infantry, and the expedient has been adopted by the Russians, the perpendicular march, besides the objects in front, is, as we have seen before, secured in the battalion of direction by the means of three markers, who, made to cover in rear, regulate the advance ; yet, the removed distance from the battalion at which the officer who overlooks this line is obliged to step, leads to some doubt respecting its efficacy, from the apparent difficulty of his

<sup>139</sup> Scharnhorst's *Handbuch*, vol. iii. § 86. In Saldern, part ii. § 21, it is mentioned in a note, that two degrees would occasion a deviation of 70 paces after 2000, and 105 paces after 3000 had been performed.

being always correct himself in posting those markers. How far this observation is founded on truth, experience alone can decide; ingenuity can, however, not be denied to the practice which, from its attempt of aiming at a precision, hitherto unsought, deserves praise. It has with great propriety been suggested, that the advanced men of the regulating body should, in their position, be subjected to geometrical precision, and that both the points originally established, as well as those afterwards taken in the prolongation, should, invariably be the result of a mathematical operation.<sup>100</sup>

*Of the Advanced, and Preservation of the Parallel.*

According to the British Regulations, besides the centre serjeant, two other non-commissioned officers are thrown to the front for the double purpose of establishing with the former a line parallel to the battalion which it is to follow, and of fixing the cadence, which, if any way lost, may, by their assistance and the quick glance of the sight to them be readily retrieved. These particulars were deemed so essential by General Saldern, that it was on this parallelism to the front, and the regular advance of

<sup>100</sup> Any of the mathematical instruments calculated to determine the perpendicular might be here employed. When, by its assistance, the two distant objects have been critically ascertained, as it will equally direct the taking of the intermediate points as well as guide their correction, no great deviation from the straight line can be apprehended.



those so brought forward, that he conceived the movement chiefly depended; to these, accordingly, he looked with greater anxiety than to the *points de vue*, the help of which, as we have already seen, he depreciated as uncertain and precarious; and, as a further means to promote equality, as to the time of march, he suggests, that, while in motion, the two advanced on each side of the one placed in the centre, should count their paces from one to ten, and preferred their repeating the lower numbers, from fear that, if continuing to tell on, it might again divert their attention.

As the purposes of parallelism and cadence here designed, are apparently answered by a single person, a question arises why several are to be brought forwards when one is sufficient? The reply to this is, that the same faults in the position, from being less in proportion, that the defective line is of greater extent, and therefore reduced to a third, if committed by three, to what they would have been had they been the error of a single individual, the parallelism is better maintained from the increase; but, although such a construction seems equally to favour a greater number than those directed to precede the battalion, it is right to add, that several inconveniences would result from a further augmentation; for, if deviations from the parallel position would be still better guarded against by nine, than three or four, the progress to the front would be less easy; and, as the errors of every individual, by operating on the whole, would incessantly disturb the march,

and destroy the orderly advance, their dress could not be so much depended upon, as where their number is limited to three or four.<sup>141</sup> In the French infantry, besides those immediately stepping in front of the centre, two *guides généraux* are also advanced before the flanks; this seems not unfavourable, and has been adopted by the Austrians, whose two flank captains are, in like manner, made to precede the battalion.

When several corps move in line, a difference of sentiment prevails as to the propriety for those advanced directors<sup>142</sup> to preserve, while on the march, their dress with one another, and all of them with those thrown in front of the directing battalion; or whether unconcerned, in leaving the care of the general line to the superior officers and those appointed by them for its preservation, they should step independently, and, as where acting singly, merely attend to the duties of the perpendicular march and equality of pace and time. It is the latter mode the British system evidently favours, and in this particular it coincides with the French, in which it is additionally remarked, that too great a nicety in the preservation of this parallel line, would

<sup>141</sup> Three is the number generally brought forwards, the Russian here form an exception, as a fourth, the captain of the fifth platoon is additionally moved to the front. The Russian officers to whom I applied for the reason of this, explained it as a mere etiquette and compliment paid to the colours.

<sup>142</sup> The name given to the serjeants brought to the front when marching in line.

even become reprehensible, from the uncertainty the constant interference with the pace, and its continual alteration would create. General Saldern is, however, friendly to its being kept up, and General Von Gaudi altogether insists upon it:<sup>143</sup> the latter principle is acted upon, in both the Austrian and Prussian infantries.

It must be allowed, however, that the reasons alleged in behalf of non-interference are forcible, nor can the diversion from the main object, the straight march and equality of step, it must occasion by the continual turning of the head, and which is so calculated to operate on the squareness of position and shoulders to the front, be well denied: as for the palliating suggestion, that the inward or the outward person of the three, should be so employed, and alone be invested with the responsibility of the parallelism, it does not remove the

<sup>143</sup> General Saldern, in his *Tactics* (§ 39), seems much to depend upon the parallel position of those advanced; but General Scharnhorst (*Handbuch*, vol. iii. § 70), says that General Saldern was still much less particular on this head than General Von Gaudi, who insisted in this dress being most carefully preserved throughout. Baron de Sinclair in his *Institution militaire* (vol. ii. page 59), a work whose manœuvres are obsolete, but whose principles will ever remain in full, rightly observes that it is ridiculous to expect the same precision in the advance of a brigade, as in that of a battalion, and that in a line of several brigades still less precision must be looked for; provided the attack be about simultaneous, and not successive, the main object is obtained; yet it must be admitted, that every thing alike of the two lines, the best dressed must carry the point, and gain the contest: without therefore degenerating into minutia, exactness should be secured.

objection, as his correction must still check and unfavourably influence the advance. Yet, as the preservation of this line cannot, after all, be viewed as unimportant, its care will perhaps be more safely left to the field or mounted officer placed on the outward flank of every battalion, whose station seems peculiarly suited to give the desired assistance, and who, by his frequently moving on the line of those advanced, and by ordering them to lengthen or to shorten their pace as occasion requires, may here readily afford the necessary aid. Were a mounted officer altogether attached to that line, and from the regulating corps constantly to watch the progress and dress of those advanced directors,<sup>144</sup> the desired object would be likely promoted, without intruding upon the duties of those immediately thrown to the front, who may then pursue their course, under the confidence and certainty of appraisal, whenever correction is desirable. By the French, the adjutant is posted at a few paces from the colour-bearer, evidently with the intention to keep up the general union, and as he is ordered not to be too particular, it obviates the defects to which a continual correction would be liable; he should, however, use his discretion in not noticing the mistakes too late and when they would no longer be easily redressed. As a further means it was devised that, by providing those non-commissioned officers who precede the battalion with camp

<sup>144</sup> This precaution of attaching a staff officer to the line preceding the battalions to superintend its dress, is a surmise of Major Palmer, inserted in his *Detail of the line*, page 214.

colours, their dress, from being easier seen, would be facilitated and be readier kept up, particularly if the line be considerable, and part of it was marching on low ground; yet the individuals, by being thus encumbered, would not be better prepared for what is expected from them, and in bad roads and windy weather, the inconvenience would be seriously felt besides; as in most of the foreign armies it is a colour-bearer who directs the perpendicular, the intention of being conspicuous is fully attained by the colour flying in the centre of the advanced; nor would the expedient better suit the British, in which infantry the pikes have been preserved by the sergeants; a weapon, the utility of which, by the bye, for the purpose of dress, and when, as here, those under officers are advanced to direct the march, or despatched as markers, was frequently experienced during the late campaigns.

*The preserving of the Parallelism in the Battalion.*

The care of keeping up the parallel position with the advanced, naturally devolves on those immediately following them, who, from their stations in rear, and by treading over the exact tracks traced out by those in their front, are obviously eligibly situated to establish a base, to which the rest of the battalion is to conform. To secure still better the parallel line, those latter are generally enjoined to keep the distance at which they originally stood when starting off.<sup>145</sup>

<sup>145</sup> The only exceptions to the rule here given, is I believe met with in the French and Netherlands' infantries.

In the British infantry, this duty of course falls upon the two colours and the officer, or serjeant who marches between them, as the persons immediately behind those brought to the front. In the like manner is this care bestowed on the three centre files in most services, but the French form here an exception, as with them the two centre platoons are so appointed to direct the dress. The mode in which this is executed, already described, will confine the discussion to the merits of this practice, which, if contemplated with due attention, will be discovered to rest on the theory adduced before, that an increased line is preferable to regulate from, the decreased influence the same error has on it; and the application of this principle will be found to bear with happier effect on those within, than on those without and preceding the battalion, from the objection produced against too great a front in the latter ceasing to operate when referring to the former; as in the ranks, the men equally placed on their sides must equally influence their advance, whether it be the identical centre files, or the whole division which points out the alignment.

To throw an obloquy on this manner, it has been urged, with some appearance of truth, that those centre platoons from being themselves, if scrupulously investigated, conducted by the middle files, it became of little moment nominally to appoint about 30 or 40, when after all the three centre individuals were those who determined the line; but this objection is incorrect, as from being thus considered

as a guidance, the dressing of that centre grand division will be better attended to ; and from its being particularly overlooked by the two platoon leaders on its flanks, as well as by a third officer, the *adjutant major*, who is stationed a few paces to the front ( *fig. 307* ), with the visible design of being better able to guide its motion : from those attentions, greater precision in its advance must be indubitably expected than if less looked after. Now if this be acquiesced to, the parallel throughout must obviously be better preserved, from the directing base which is so extended ; and the method, by favourably operating on the line, must check the wings against considerable departure in dress, which latter is still further guarded against, in the French service, by the two *guides généraux* who are seen each in front of a flank. That the French system in those points claims attention, I am convinced from what I witnessed in the *Champ de Mars*, where, in a review before the Dauphin, then Duke of Angouleme, three battalions of the *garde royale* advanced in the extended position with surprising precision, and as it appeared to me that the individual performance offered nothing striking, or above what is commonly met with, I feel inclined to attribute it less to the effect of an anxious and laboured drill, than to the result of a well digested system of execution.<sup>146</sup>

<sup>146</sup> General Von Gaudi who, in his instructions, much dwells on the expediency of attending to the interior state of the centre division, views it as the surest means to preserve the dress of a battalion while on the march.

*On the dressing of the Battalion.*

In dressing, the men are not constantly to turn their heads towards the centre of the battalion, as this, by carrying the shoulders, would inevitably derange the position, and counteract the very intention of alignement designed by it to be promoted; but they are habitually to look straight forwards, and to depend chiefly for their dress on the squareness of position to the front, the equality of step, and light touch of the neighbour's arm on the directing point, so as merely occasionally, and when they feel the side touch of the arm relinquished, or unlike to what it was before, to take a glimpse towards the centre, to ascertain the nature of the mistake, and how far they have committed themselves, in order to apply the requisite correction.<sup>147</sup> Were this neighbour, on the

<sup>147</sup> A determinate mode of dressing, while marching in line, has I believe never been properly fixed upon. General Warnery (page 74, on Guibert, page 85), maintains that unless the men be permitted to turn the head, no regularity in the advance can be expected, and that after repeated trials, the attempt at performing the march in line, while the men look straight forwards, was given up as impracticable, a circumstance he himself experienced, and he probably alludes to some fruitless endeavours of the kind made at Postdam: Indeed the dilemma, into which the necessity of keeping the heads straight forwards for the preservation of the perpendicular progress, and the immediate occasion for turning it at least somewhat for the preservation of the alignement, has involved all the military authors, is apparent in their writings, and no less perceptible in all the existing Regulations (except the F. E. and E. which is rather consistent in its direction respecting the dress on the march), in some of which the instructions on this head, even border on immediate



directing side, however, to fly off, so as to leave a chasm, they are not immediately to comply by abruptly closing upon him, but gradually to incline, and to await even two or three paces before they do so, to see how far his deviation in the line of march was corresponding to a general movement which is to be followed up; or the mere compliance with some error arisen among the files nearer approached to the middle of the battalion, which, if so, as it improperly withdrew the individual from his line of march, will, by its very correction, afterwards replace him in his former position; and which motion had they indiscreetly complied with, would have tended to propagate the mistake and make it more general.

Another attention, equally important in the men, which will much contribute to their orderly advance is, their resistance to all pressure from the outward hand; this, by preventing their being thrown out of their true perpendicular, breaks the tide of an improper current, which, if not stopped, would spread itself over the whole surface.

Besides the immediate object of securing the proper advance by the perpendicular position, the contradiction. I have here adopted the Rules, which I have previously ventured to establish in the *British Drill*, by which the habitual position to the front is secured, and the mere deviation from it allowed, 1st. when an error in dress is actually existing, which renders the momentary glance of the eyes to the centre at the time desirable, if not indispensable, to effect the correction; 2nd. when the pace undergoes alteration, a period at which the dress is more liable to suffer derangement: whether I have solved the problem, I leave experience to determine.

injunction to the soldiers to keep the eyes habitually to the front, in removing the constant dressing to the side, and by rendering the alignment no longer subservient to it, will now permit the officers, by occasionally looking inwards, to effect small corrections in the platoon towards the regulating point,<sup>146</sup> and which within their reach may be accomplished without having recourse to noise or clamorous exertion it; is the friendly hint which, if attended to, will obviate many evils, but whose efficacy is lost, when it assumes the stern tone of command, as, by leaving doubts on the mind, and by occasioning indecision in the step, it would, no longer beneficial, merely tend to derange the movement.

This slight interference, which, in compliance to the custom of the foreign armies, I have ventured to recommend to all platoon leaders during the advance, though in contradiction to the late Rules and Regulations, cannot be considered as incongruous to the system, as those duties are particularly pointed

<sup>146</sup> The reason which I conceive chiefly to have directed the compiler of the late Rules and Regulations, to enjoin officers, when in the ranks, to act on the march merely as other individuals, without attempting to interfere with the alignment, is the apprehension that this, by more or less influencing the position, would immediately operate on those, who beyond, dress on them; but as the head and sight are almost constantly to be kept to the front and the dress is no longer rendered dependant on the glance of the eyes to the directing point, this objection is evidently removed. That the reason alledged has led to the injunction of the order alluded to, appears beyond doubt from the flank captains, whose situations not exposing to the same inconvenience, being not merely permitted but ordered (R. and R. part iii. § 166, part iv. § 201), to watch the line.

out to the two officers placed on the flank of the battalion, who, from their moving more independently, are, it is conceived, more favourably situated to check, by a timely interposition, any great deviation, which at the extremity of the line might occur in the alignment. It is true that this additional care might have been here influenced from additional danger, for as the faults increase and accumulate in running through the line, their occurrence must be multiplied, and their effects more considerable on the flanks, than on any other part of the battalion.

In those corrections, the officers stationed on the flanks may be guided by the centre, and by each others, for instance, were the one on the right (B 2, *fig. 23*) to observe the line which passes through his colours to go in front of B 3, the opposite officer, he will conclude that he is too much to the rear, if to the contrary he sees the continuation of this line to the rear of B 3, he will immediately conclude that he is too much advanced, and as either recur, by lengthening or shortening his pace, as well as by advancing or keeping back the neighbouring division, attempt to remedy the error. This expedient was, by General Saldern, extended likewise where several corps acted in conjunction.<sup>149</sup> But this, although it

<sup>149</sup> Saldern's *Tactics*, § 36 and 40; the principle of this dress, which is not fully explained in the German author, and still less happily illustrated in the English translation by Mr. Landmann, consists, in the captain B 2 and B 4 (*fig. 23*), keeping constantly A 3 and B 3, with the colours of the third, the directing battalion, in a line; and for A 3 then to remain dressed with B 2 and the colours of the second battalion, while B 3 keeps in the same manner in line with B 4 and the colours of the fifth battalion; those four, B 2,

might assist to keep up the general connexion is not unexceptionable, as the officer, B 2, for instance, where applied to the interior dress of the battalion, is not certain when he sees the line, that is passing through the colours, to the front of B 3, whether it is he, or B 3, who is too much to the rear, and were its prolongation to pass behind, whether it is he or B 3 who is too much advanced; and the same uncertainty prevails when the means is employed as an assistance to promote the general alignement of the line. That this difficulty might be much obviated by the assistance of the field and mounted officers, and by their timely appraisal where they see misconception, must be allowed, and that practice will give the officers here a certain dexterity to judge where the defect lies, and render them more expert in what is here required for them, will be willingly admitted. In the French infantry, where serjeants are made to precede the flanks of the battalion (*fig.* 307), they seem, from being detached, still better situated than the flank officers, who move in the ranks, to perform those duties, and by dressing respectively the one on the inward hand (towards the battalion of direction) on the nearest of the next battalion and the neighbouring colour,<sup>150</sup> it would not unlikely tend to promote precision. Theory is, in this in- B 3, A 3, and B 4, also endeavour to keep up a base together. B 1 and B 2 performs as B 3 and B 4; and A 1 and A 2 as A 2 and B 3. The flank captains C and C dress on their own and next battalion's colours.

<sup>150</sup> When so, the advanced serjeants behave as explained in note 149, for the captains, namely, the under officers in front at their corresponding captains in rear.

stance, so far supported by experience, that the measure was tried with success<sup>151</sup> by Lord Viscount Cathcart, when commander of the forces in Ireland; however, the objection of intrusion upon the attention of the individual is not by it removed, and the diversion it creates from the care he should bestow on his line of march, as well as derangement in his position that results from it, are left undiminished; and since the assistance of the mounted officers cannot be dispensed with, it seems, after all, preferable to confide altogether in them the responsibility of an object, which, from their readiness in overlooking the whole, it is so much in their power satisfactorily to discharge, and if so, to relieve those advanced from a duty, which must more or less influence their square attitude and perpendicular advance.

Were the centre sergeant perfectly correct in ascertaining his *points de vue*, as well as exact in proceeding on them, those on his sides constantly in line with him, the central division, or the files nominated for guidance, precise in keeping their original distance to those advanced as well as the parallel positions with them, and the battalion finally to remain constantly dressed with its centre, the whole of those combined qualifications would procure the precision so eagerly sought after, since the most exact alignement would be preserved throughout on the march; but this is far from what can be expected, for as every individual is liable to err, and the mistake of every man must, according to his position, more or less operate on the whole, this approxima-

<sup>151</sup> Major Palmer's *Detail of the line*, march in front, page 216.

tion to what we may well call perfection, is altogether unattainable, and in spite of every exertion, will the utmost difficulty, particularly in rough and uneven ground, be experienced to maintain, while in progress in line, the desirable, nay, even the indispensable, order and regularity. It is, therefore, not to be wondered at, that this advance in the extended position, has been always deemed the supreme excellence of the art. Yet, as the theatre for performance is rarely selected, a battalion must still be able to approach an enemy in line, whatever may be the local disadvantages it labours under, or it is inadequate for service, as unprepared to perform its most important duty in the field; nor will an indifferent execution compensate for what is here required, when it is reflected that all attempts at correction must be given up while thus closed upon the opponent, and that, although such an irregular line may answer the purpose of firing, the disorderly state in which it is left after the confused advance, can never allow it to follow up an advantage, as, by multiplying the flanks, and rendering the attack successive, it remains divested of that strength and firmness derived from union, which alone is capable to make impression. To alleviate an evolution so perplexing and so important is an object worthy to stimulate the speculative: impressed with the opinion that the following rules may be of assistance to its performance, I shall conclusively present them.

END OF VOL II.









